

NORTH AMERICA

UNITED STATES

THE STORY OF THE UNITED STATES LAZARIST FATHERS

BY REV. THOMAS A. SHAW, C. M.

BOOK FIRST

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FIRST VISITOR

CHAPTER V

The Ocean Voyage at Last Begun : Safe, Sound and Happy the
Ranger Docks at the Monument City of the Chesapeake.

On June 12th, 1816, the following passengers each one carrying his luggage, boarded his ocean home, the ship called the Ranger: Visitor Felix De Andreis, Fathers Rosati and Acquaroni, C. M.; Fathers Carette and Ferrari secular clergy from Porto Mauricio near Genoa; Messrs F. X. Dahmen, Jas. Tichilote, Leo Deys, Castro Gonzales, Seminarians: Bro. Martin Blanka, C. M. and three laymen, namely, Francis Moranviller, Medard De Latre and John Flegipont who as lay-brothers intended to enter our Congregation.

Obliged to remain in Europe because of urgent business his vast diocese called for, yet would Bishop Dubourg see, as he did see, the colony of the Lord's husbandmen off.

In bidding them farewell he insisted that each one of the band should show the Visitor, Father De Andreis, that love and submission which his virtue and high office implied and demanded. Each one he blessed and embraced, and then pulled himself away leaving them in tears.

Herewith is given by the pen of Visitor De Andreis to

his Vicar General at Rome a description of the sea voyage from Bordeaux to Baltimore.

May, June, July, 1813.

Very Reverend Vicar General Sicardi:

On leaving Bordeaux the 12th of June, having put on the customary dress of the American clergy, consisting of a short coat, cravat and round hat, we embarked on the Garonne, in a sloop which conveyed us to the American brig "Ranger," lying at Poliac. Our baggage being already on board, we ascended the sides of the vessel by means of rope ladders, our number amounting to thirteen; five priests, four seminarists, one lay-brother and three postulants, who, by-the-by all three of them, subsequently left us. Berths had been prepared for us in a large airy room, around which each one had his own place, all being arranged like the shelves in a library. With the exception of a young Quaker from Baltimore, we were the only passengers. The captain professed no religion; he and all his crew were Americans. Among the sailors were two negroes and an Indian. Although a Protestant, the skipper made easy, as much as he could, the performances of our religious exercises; he always treated us with respect, and took pleasure in assisting at divine service and in hearing us speak on religious subjects; but at the conclusion of our discourse, he would say candidly that he cared more for his dollars than for his soul, and that the business of this world seemed to him of more importance than that of the next! What lamentable blindness!

The day after our embarkation, being the festival of Corpus Christi, as we were still near land, four of us went ashore at break of day, in the sloop; two said Mass, and the others approached the holy table. We then returned in haste to the ship; at eight we set sail, and arrived to-

wards evening, opposite Rohan. On the 14th, we availed ourselves of the privilege granted us by the Sovereign Pontiff, and said Mass in the ship. Having with us all the sacred vessels, and a good supply of altar-bread, wine, and tapers; each time the most Holy Sacrifice was offered, a priest, in surplice and stole, stood beside the celebrant, with his hand on the base of the chalice after the consecration, in order to prevent any accident. When we began our journey, the weather was delightful, but we soon experienced the effects of a sea voyage. Being all sick, we had no Mass on the 15th; on Sunday, the 16th, we had two, and the same number every succeeding day, except when the ship was tossed about too violently. Fathers Rosati, Carretti, and the two postulants, were sick the whole time; I suffered less than any one. We had some stormy weather, particularly during one night, which we spent in prayer; it seemed as if that night was destined to be our last, so furiously did the waves lash against the vessel's sides, that the planks seemed, every moment ready to give way. The sailors were terrified and the captain himself exhorted us to redouble our prayers. The Almighty was pleased to deliver us from this peril, that our sufferings might be prolonged; the victims were ready, but the blow was deferred; He alone knows why!

Before we left Bordeaux, Bishop Dubourg, gave me a patent of Vicar General, and another to Father Rosati, in case any accident should happen to me. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, as littoral Bishop, gave us full faculties as far as Baltimore. While passing the coasts of Spain, we saw some whales, and other marine monsters, which came within some little distance of us; we also admired the flying-fish, which in some respects resembles a bird. One of these fishes having fallen one evening upon the table in our room, we eat it and found it excellent. It was something like a small codfish, and its membranous wings

were sufficiently extended to enable it to fly from time to time. We also noticed with wonder and admiration, a large tower constructed in the midst of the ocean, several miles from land, and seeming to rise above the waves, without any visible rock to support it.

We made the Novena of Saint Vincent, and it happened that, on the very feast, a negro slave, for relapse into theft and drunkenness, was to undergo the chastisement which was customary in such cases; namely, to be thrown into the sea attached to a rope which passed under the ship. It being drawn up on the other side, obliged the poor wretch to pass under the vessel, once or several times, at the imminent risk of losing his life in the process. We told the captain that it was a great festival for us, and begged him to pardon, for the sake of our Saint, the unhappy delinquent. Luckily, we succeeded in obtaining our request.

We had now been about forty days at sea, and had made very little progress, owing to calms, and adverse winds; the captain complained that the provisions would soon be exhausted, and he feared that in consequence, we should die of hunger; we were about three hundred miles from Baltimore, and, if we did not go back every day, at least we did not advance; we resolved then, to make a vow, in honor of Saint Vincent, at the First Vespers of his feast, and it was expressed in the following terms:

“We, the undersigned missionaries of Louisiana, amid the perils which surround us, being firmly convinced of the influence and special favor which thou, O glorious and illustrious hero of Christian charity, Saint Vincent of Paul, dost enjoy before the throne of the Divine Majesty; on this day, dedicated by the Church to the celebration of thy glorious triumph; prostrate at thy feet, implore thee by the zeal which inflamed thy heart for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the welfare of those who conse-

crate their lives to promote these ends, to accept the vow we joyfully offer thee, and by which we bind ourselves to celebrate, in the best possible manner, the day of thy happy death, on the 27th of September, 1816, to prepare for it by a novena, and a fast on the eve; in the hope that thou wilt obtain for us a favorable wind, and a safe termination of our voyage; together with an increase of that apostolic spirit, which was so conspicuous in the whole course of thy holy life.—Amen.”

As some of our number were French, the above words were translated into that language, and all joined in making the vow. We celebrated the feast of Saint Vincent, with all possible solemnity; our little room was hung with sheets festooned with fringes, and decorated with reliquaries, Agnus Deis, etc. Each one of us celebrated the Holy Sacrifice, the last Mass being chanted; we also had Vespers, a sermon in French, etc. These exercises were performed with heartfelt delight by every one.

It was not long before we experienced the effects of our vow; a day or two after, to the great surprise and joy of all, we began to perceive the continent of America which seemed at first only like a dark line, dotted here and there with clusters of green trees. We soon entered Chesapeake Bay, from which we had so long been kept away, by the current flowing from the Gulf of Mexico into the Atlantic Ocean, like a large river, bearing along with it, masses of seaweed and other marine formations. When we entered the bay a schooner came, according to custom, with a pilot on board, to take command of our brig, and steer her through the difficult passes. The captain immediately came to tell us that the pilot was a Catholic, which was, of course, sufficient reason for an interchange of mutual congratulations. On the 25th we drew near land, and Father Acquaroni, impatient to go ashore, asked my leave to avail himself of the opportunity presented by the return

of the schooner. He did so, and came back the same evening, to the ship. Our landing took place on the 26th of July, the octave day of Saint Vincent, about ten o'clock in the morning.

I cannot describe the impression produced upon us by the magnificent view of the harbor of Baltimore, together with the splendid situation of the bay; I hardly think there can be, in the world a more beautiful prospect. Our first impulse on landing, was to kneel and kiss the ground, but, the place where we disembarked was so crowded, that we deferred doing that. Having entered the place, we soon perceived the difference between the cities of Europe, and those of the New World, with regard to the construction of the houses, streets, etc. The streets of the latter are wide, the houses rather low than otherwise—there are side-walks, as in the Corso at Rome, sometimes they are bordered with trees; and numerous pumps are to be met with, by which means, water is always at hand. Hungry and warm, as we were, we had to traverse the entire city, inquiring, as we went along, for St. Mary's College, the house of the Sulpicians, which was situated outside the city, at the very opposite end to the place of our landing.

We reached it at last, and were received by the president, Father Bruté, the most holy, learned, humble and affable man that I ever knew. He welcomed us with the utmost cordiality, and during the whole time of our stay in Baltimore, and even afterwards, he never ceased to bestow upon us, marks of his kindness. He obtained for us many handsome donations, of some hundred crowns, besides which he supplied us with everything that we could possibly need. For some days we remained at the college, after which we were located with different clergymen, as had been done at Bordeaux. The worthy vicar general, Father Fenwick, conferred on me the honor of singing High Mass, at the Cathedral, on the Assumption, which is

the principal festival of the diocese, and the day on which the first bishop, in the United States, was consecrated. We were constantly employed, on feast days, in various sacred functions, at the different churches, but it was a painful thing for me to hear bells pealing from magnificent temples, and to be told, that these edifices belonged to heretics, although in the State of Maryland, and especially in the city of Baltimore, the Catholics are most numerous and fervent.

"Maria et Montes" which seemed so frightful in anticipation, vanish little by little as we advance; the rest of our journey to St. Louis, is described to us as being of easy accomplishment. We shall start anew, please God, after resting for a month. This morning, to my great delight, I celebrated the most Holy Sacrifice in the church of the seminary; there was a great concourse of persons, many of whom approached the holy table. Although there exist in this city about a dozen different sects, the Catholics form the richest and most numerous portion of the population; religion, visibly, is on the increase, and I was both surprised and delighted to see the number of churches, together with the fervor of the Catholics, and the favorable dispositions manifested by our separated brethren, towards a reconciliation with their true mother, the Church. I sincerely hope we may find the same sentiments among the Indians. We are all in good health, notwithstanding our journey, and the change of diet; things, which, in Rome, would have been very injurious to me, here cause me no inconvenience. And thus has Divine Providence arranged all things. In Rome, I was in spite of myself, a burden and a trouble to all my good companions, of whose society I was not worthy, on account of my more than gigantic pride and self-love, which, with all my efforts, I have not yet succeeded in subduing perfectly; therefore, the Almighty has designed to bury me among the savages, where

I am now hastening with the greatest joy, firmly resolved to live and die in complete forgetfulness of all creatures. There remains for me nothing more to desire in this world but death; delay will only make me long the more for it.

The Lord vouchsafes to favor me with profound peace in the midst of the troubles inseparable from my employment. I beg your prayers and those of the Community.

FELIX DE ANDREIS, I. P. C. M.

It is regrettable that in none of his letters has the Visitor attempted a description of this matchless inland sea, 200 miles in length, 10 in width and 12 at its mouth, protected on the north side by the Sentinel Cape Charles, and on the south side by the Sentinel Cape Henry, each one a bulwark massively artillieried to withstand the rudest assailant.

A schooner with a pilot met the dauntless Ranger, at the mouth of the Bay: and heaving along side of her, the pilot boarded and took charge of the Brig. The schooner lashed to the vessel lead her in a northern course up the Bay. Tributaries in numbers and in volume enlarged the great stream, the Pocomoke Bay, the Choptank, Eastern and Chester rivers, eastward; the York, Rappahannock, Potomac, Patuxent rivers, westward; islands lying chiefly along the eastern shore abounding with crops of fruits, cereals and vegetables, Fortress Monroe, Old Point Comfort a gem and rendezvous, even of those early days for the relics of old decency, for hunters after pleasure of various classes and degrees, for members of Congress in order to study at leisure the political Zodiac, and get its bearing for the next campaign; objects so many and various, striking and picturesque to the sight and filling with gladness the soul of the observers, the hitherto drooping sea-sick missionary; all the above charming views were in noted contrast to the creaking and lurching of the Ranger on the

deep as the roar of wind and wave and shock from both seemed to be the last of her.

The vessel at last was piloted from the Bay into the river Patapsco: on the right lay North Point, the scene in the war of 1812 of a battle with the British; up the river hardly six miles from Baltimore loomed up on the left Fortress McHenry which in the same war had by its deadly bombs replied to and driven away England's fleet that had infested it. The genius of the American Poet, Francis Keys, witness to the bravery of the Fort's gallant garrison, was instantly lit up, and it gave to the world of letters and to the world of the United States that gem of American songs!

"Oh! say can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thro' the perilous night
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming —
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our Flag was still there."

MEXICO

*Letter from the REV. E. GONI, Visitor of Mexico, to
the REV. J. ARAMBARI, Visitor of the Province of Madrid*

Havana, November 22, 1914.

You will be pleased, I am sure, to receive some news of our houses in Mexico. The following has just reached me.

House of Mexico.— In its issue of November 9, *The Liberal* of Mexico stated that the preceding day, Novem-

ber 8, "The Mexican Feminine Center," an association which as one of the speakers said, "expects its reward from heaven, has no fear of hell, and will do good for the sake of good," was formed in our house. The paper gave illustrations representing the front of the house, the library, a group of women at the opening exercises, and General Cosio Robelo with General Heriberto Jara and the foundress of the association. I will now quote the newspaper clipping: "When the opening ceremony was ended, the Governor of the District, followed by his attendants, visited the different halls of the building which, we may note in passing, is sufficiently large, and well-adapted to the requirements of the new association."

I believe it was on September 29, that our house with our valuable library was seized. We were able to save only our archives, some objects of piety, and some Children of Mary Manuals. We also took away the most precious ornaments from the church.

As all communication with the church is cut off, two or three confrères with a few brothers take care of it and reside in the catechism hall. The rest of the Community are dispersed among different families. The report about Fathers Martinez and Orzanco's arrest is false. Father Fernandez is now chaplain of our Church of the Conception.

Tacubaya. — The school continues its work with more than one hundred boarders. There will be no change until the close of the term which, according to custom, takes place in November. The confrères board at the college but lodge in private houses. For several days, six hundred cavalrymen occupied the refectory and study halls, but no damage was done; their horses were quartered in the recreation yards, but the pretty garden was respected as the soldiers used another entrance.

Puebla. — The last news received, apprises us of the seizure of our house. I do not know what use will be made of it. Our confrères are dispersed.

Oaxaca. — By disguising themselves and for some time keeping from the house at night, the confrères here were able to continue their classes in comparative peace.

Merida, Yucatan. — Here all foreign priests were “entreated” to leave the State within five days. Consequently, Fathers J. Rodriguez, Leopold Rodriguez, J. de las Heras, R. Atanes, F. Ansotegui, P. Iturrate, C. Moral, E. Martinez, left. Fathers J. Rodriguez and F. Ansotegui are in Matanzas; the others went to New Orleans, some as professors, others as chaplains. There is not one Lazarist in the seminary. At Lourdes, Merida, three Mexican confrères remain; namely, Fathers C. Torres, J. Cœllo, and M. Petul. Fathers Berenguer, J. Saldana and Montoya remained at the college as professors. Over forty Spanish priests from Yucatan have come to Havana.

Chilapa. — Father Soriano, a Mexican confrère, is the only one here.

Monterey. — After the departure of the Lazarists, Brother Celis remained as gardener, but at last weary of being alone, he went to the capital. On his return to Monterey, he found that everything had been seized even the garden. All the valuables belonging to the Congregation in this seminary are safe.

Chihuahua. — From a letter dated November 13, we learn that Father Granados, Vicar General of Chihuahua, wrote to Villa, asking permission for our return. . . . By this time, Father Manuel Amo must have reached Spain.

I was told of his sufferings and the pitiable condition in which he arrived here. With this exception, our priests, it seems to me, have suffered less than any one else.

Father Orzanco, accompanied by Father J. Garcia, who is now in Germantown, went to the United States, in an effort to save some of our buildings here, among others the college of Tacubaya, our house of retreats, St. Vincent's Asylum, etc.

It is reported that to-morrow the Americans will withdraw from Vera Cruz. The steamer *Antonio Lopez* which conveyed us here, returned at the request of the Spanish Consul, for the hundreds of Spaniards who are awaiting transportation. Doubtless some of our confrères are among them.

Persecution is more severe in some States than in others. Campeche, with incredible despotism, drove out all the clergy including the bishop; but in Yucatan, the people with greater civility "requested" foreign priests to leave. Father C. Alvarez, a Spaniard, remained there through an express order from Carranza. When conditions will improve, God alone knows. All here hope everything from Francisco Villa, so fortunate in war, and who, it seems is friendly to religion and Spain, and will not oppose the return of the Spanish priests.

I beg that you recommend the Province of Mexico and its members to the prayers of your Community. God will bless your charity.

In the love of our Lord, I am, etc.

EUGENE GONI

On December 7, Father Goni wrote to our Most Honored Father and after mentioning the facts already narrated, adds these reflections:

For many years, conditions similar to the present state of affairs have existed in Mexico, and revolutions have

been almost of annual occurrence. The present one, however, is the most sanguinary ever witnessed by those Spaniards who have come over within the last few years.

Considering events in the spiritual light, we, sons of Saint Vincent, owe an immense debt of gratitude to our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, for so far we have suffered the least of any Community in Mexico. We have had no victim, and the only one who endured much physical suffering was Father Manuel Amo who left for Spain about a month ago.

Kindly pray, I beg of you, for our poor Mexican Province.

EUGENE GONI

*Letter from REV. E. GONI, C. M., Visitor,
to the VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General.*

Havana, December 19, 1914

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

My preceding letters have informed you of the condition of our houses and confrères of the Province of Mexico. We may say that this province is very nearly destroyed. However our Lord visibly protected us, while other communities suffered so much, as I have been informed by a priest who interviewed some Jesuits and other religious from Mexico.

Bishop Gillow of Oaxaca, now in the United States, wrote me that our house of Oaxaca, in which there are eight priests, three students from Barcelona and three brothers, continues its work.

Father Berenguer who is at the head of our college in

Merida, Yucatan, during the absence of Mgr. Mejia, wrote me on the 5th inst: "It is truly by a special protection of God that we three priests and three brothers have remained here, continuing to lead a community life, as though nothing had happened. I am happy to tell you that all goes on admirably well in our college. There are four hundred fifty students and our able professors are enthusiastic over their work. Considering how blessed we are, I am covered with confusion and unceasingly render thanks to God for His special goodness in our regard."

As the diocese of Campeche, whose bishop is a suffragan of Merida, Yucatan, is without bishop or clergy, I was asked to send Father J. Cœllo, the Apostle of Yucatan, as I call him, to Campeche to care for the flock bereft of its pastor. I sent him with Brother Lora, and the Cathedral has been placed under his care. He will do immense good there if our Lord blesses his present labors as abundantly as He did those of the past.

So far I have received no news from the City of Mexico. A letter may arrive at any moment.

Father Aguilar embarked yesterday for Merida. As only Mexican priests are tolerated there, I will probably recall Father Morales, who is at present in El Paso, Texas, United States, and send him to help Father Aguilar in the seminary. Since the middle of October, that is from the time of the departure of the Spanish priests, this institution has been directed by secular priests. The Archbishop of Merida and I decided this was the best thing to be done. His Grace resides with us here at the Merced. If my plans are realized, our three houses in Merida will be in working order.

EUGENE GONI



OUR DEAR DEPARTED

OUR MISSIONARIES

Rev. John Maher, November 18, 1914, Germantown, Pa.; 40 years of age, 21 of vocation.

Brother Andrew Colacutti, November 27, 1914, Macerata, Italy; 57, 32.

Rt. Rev. Valentine Ampuero, December 2, 1914, Puno, Peru; 45, 16.

Rev. James Fronteri, December 2, 1914, Placentia, Italy; 81, 63.

Brother Michael Tabar, December 6, 1914, Madrid, Spain; 49, 35.

Rev. John Baptist Girard, December 18, 1914, Paris, France; 91, 62.

Rev. Vincent Orciuolo, December 19, 1914, Turin, Italy; 63, 43.

Rev. Charles Wittib, December 21, 1914, Ningpo, China; 45, 28.

Rev. Thomas Abella, December 26, 1914, Oran, Algeria; 68, 51.

Brother Joseph Christovao, December, 1914, Santa Quiteria, Portugal; 71, 34.

OUR SISTERS

- Sr. Frances Quinlan, Italian Hospital, London; 71 years of age, 37 of vocation.
- “ Anastasia Bane, Institute for Deaf Mutes, Boston Spa, England; 49, 28.
- “ Margaret Halligan, Central House, Mill Hill, England; 76, 53.
- “ Elizabeth Roche, Providence Hospital, Washington, District of Columbia; 73, 56.
- “ Frances Duverney, St. Vincent's Hospital, Norfolk, Virginia.; 79, 60.
- “ Annie Boland, Charity Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana; 62, 34.
- “ Catherine Ryan, St. Agnes' Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland; 46, 23.
- “ Josephine Fallon, Mother House, Paris; 41, 18.
- “ Margaret O'Neill, St. Paul's Sanitarium, Dallas, Texas; 30, 9.
- “ Cecilia Livaudais, Mt. Hope Retreat, Baltimore, Maryland; 76, 58.
- “ Anna McKinney, St. John's Asylum, Utica, New York; 80, 56.
- “ Ellen Farrell, St. Vincent's Asylum, Detroit, Michigan; 74, 52.
- “ Catherine Kenny, City Hospital, Mobile, Alabama; 61, 38.
- “ Elizabeth Price, Mt. Hope Retreat, Baltimore, Maryland; 79, 61.
- “ Mary O'Donnell, Orphan Boys' Home, Kansas City, Missouri; 76, 55.
- “ Margaret McDonough, Mt. Hope Retreat, Baltimore, Maryland; 56, 19.
- “ Mildred Kane, St. Vincent's Sanitarium, Sherman, Texas; 23, 2.

Sr. Anna Tiernan, Central House, Emmitsburg, Maryland;
75, 55.

“ Isabel Apodaca, Charity Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana; 35, 15.

“ Caroline Eck, Central House, Emmitsburg, Maryland;
76, 58.

“ Mary Creman, Mullanphy Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri; 78, 57.

“ Mary Farrell, Central House, Emmitsburg, Maryland;
84, 59.

R. I. P.

EUROPE

FRANCE

THE MOTHER HOUSE DURING THE WAR

JANUARY 1—APRIL 1, 1915

January 1—Under the patronage of the Sacred Heart the new year began. At Montmartre twelve hundred men spent the night in prayer; we were not of the privileged number, and we were content to wish that morning at Mass, a good and happy Year to all of our confrères who, as soldiers stood ankle-deep in the water of the trenches, as road-infirmarians cared for the wounded, as stretcher-bearers carried them far from shot and shell, and to our Sisters spending themselves day and night; and we raised towards heaven the Sacred Host to preserve them from dangers.

January 3—A day of national prayer. We sang the Litany of the Saints to which we added the invocation “St. Vincent, pray for us.” We remembered that in 1830, his heart had appeared shrouded with sadness; this soothed our sorrow, and we loved to recall these comforting words: “The heart of Saint Vincent is somewhat consoled because it has obtained of God, by the intercession of Mary, that his two families should not perish in the midst of these misfortunes, and that He would make use of them to reanimate faith.” To-day we began the novena to Saint Genevieve, and faithful to the recom-

mendation of Saint Vincent, many of us ascended the holy mountain. Saint Vincent said in 1652, the enemy being at the gates of Paris, "there never was seen so great a gathering of people, nor more exterior devotion" to Saint Genevieve. But a parallel case occurred in 1915. He added that the result was, before the eighth day the enemy departed. He concluded his letter of June 21st by saying: "We hope the more in God's goodness because we strive to appease His justice by the great good that is now being done in Paris regarding the bashful poor and the poor of the country who have sought refuge here. The good Sisters of Charity have a greater share than we in the corporal assistance of the poor. There are others who do the same elsewhere." The phrase which concludes this letter will be the excuse which the *Annals* offers, if it be reproached for giving in this issue all that has been done in 1914 and 1915 by the children of Saint Vincent. Let us listen to our Blessed Father: "Behold, Sir, the new departure from the little maxim in which we are not to write anything, but who could find fault for publishing the greatness of God and His mercies?" — ABELLY, *Life and Works of Saint Vincent de Paul*, Book I, p. 287.

January 20 — A great innovation at the Mother House! For some time we saw strange men accompanied by the Assistant going about through the house. Why were they here? Were they inspectors seeking for spies, or commissioners who wished to give us refugees? This mystery has been quickly solved. They are electricians who came to plan for installing *electric light*. And now on this historic day, January 20, 1915, the reign of candles and oil lamps has ceased, to give place to the dynasty of electric bulbs.

January 30 — We had the sorrow of losing Father

Dumas, who had been in the infirmary for several years. At the conference given on his virtues, the most edifying events of his life were recalled. His former pupils of Meaux and Tours informed us that when he was professor in the preparatory schools, he punished very little, and that he always prepared for his classes with scrupulous care, which is no small praise. They extolled his obedience, his charity, the fidelity with which he asked pardon for his impatience, and above all, his great love of prayer. A great part of his time in the infirmary was passed in praying either for the Superiors and directors, or especially, and this was his great devotion, for the deacons, that they would become good priests. Most Honored Father Fiat also when speaking of him and of the late Father Vercruyce, said in alluding to their prayers for the Community: *Hi sunt duae olivae et duo candelabra in conspectu Domini terrae stantes.* (Apoc., XI, 4.)

February 2— Father Angeli resigned as Sub-Assistant of the Mother House. He was replaced by Father Gleizes, who resigned his charge as Procurator to Father Hertault.

February 4— Another appointment from Rome has reached us. We learn that Father Fontaine, Superior of the International House, has been appointed *Consultor of the Congregation of the Propaganda.*

February 5— This evening at the Mother House the Retreat of the Archconfraternity of the Holy Agony was ended. Every day there were two exercises; in the morning at eight o'clock, Mass and meditation, in the evening at three o'clock, the beads, sermon and Benediction. The new Sub-Director, Father Baros, preached the instructions.

February 7 — The Holy Father requested that to-day be consecrated in Europe to special prayer for peace. How Saint Vincent would be transported with ardor in fulfilling the wishes of the Pope!

We pray before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, we ask, according to the wishes of our venerated Cardinal, for “a solid and lasting peace which, according to the Scriptures, is a work of justice, a peace which supposes the triumph and the reign of right.”

The *Semaine religieuse* of Paris says: “The old basilica of Notre-Dame, which, from the beginning of the war, has seen so many beautiful ceremonies, has had nothing more beautiful than the fervor and constancy of prayer.”

February 11 — Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. By a beautiful and touching thought, all the children of France were gathered together in prayer to the Immaculate Virgin. His Eminence invited to Notre-Dame “the children of those institutions of Paris which, having a chapel and a chaplain, do not follow the ordinary parish exercises.”

This applies to a great number of orphanages cared for by the Sisters of Charity. Unfortunately, for want of room, all those who came could not be accommodated. His Eminence, one of whose qualities is a “genius for the obvious,” accommodating himself to his little hearers, spoke in endearing terms to them. Afterwards, the procession was arranged as at Lourdes and they sang the familiar hymns: *Sur cette colline* and the *Ave maris Stella* of the pilgrims of Massabielle. This recalled the famous Eucharistic Congress at Lourdes which was held just before the war, when all nations united in love at the feet of Mary. They were striving to discover means of bringing about the reign of our Saviour; and God in His providence used a terrible but efficacious means, the war, to bring back many souls to Jesus and Mary. Pope

Pius X said: "Jesus Christ comes to meet His Mother at Lourdes and you will see that they will do great things for France." We see these words realized. It is not without emotion that we recall this Congress of Lourdes where moreover the children of Saint Vincent had a small place, since Mgr. Clerc-Renaud read there a report and the boys' choir from the Berceau of Saint Vincent de Paul had the honor of being invited by Mgr. Schoepfer.

February 12—This evening the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament begins at Saint Lazare. The preacher is Father Courdent. He revives our faith and love by his pious exhortations. Although the young men are not there, thanks to the good will of all, we have no difficulty in finding adorers for three days and three nights. A curious coincidence is that just at this time there appears in the *Acta* a letter of Cardinal Gasparri on nightly adoration, in which the eminent Secretary of State said of Benedict XV: "Numerous are the churches in Rome which witnessed him as a young prelate, after his busy days, passing the night before our divine Lord in the tabernacle, exposed solemnly for the adoration of the faithful. Whilst at Bologna, as archbishop of that illustrious see, he had greatly at heart to promote by word and example, this simple and salutary practice. When elevated to the supreme dignity as head of the universal Church, His Holiness looked with kindness on the members of this Association, especially on those of Rome, whom he admitted to his Mass."

February 14—In the house of *rue de l'Abbaye* in charge of the Sisters of Charity, we were permitted to assist at an interesting meeting; viz. The general assembly of Syndicates of professional women. The session was presided over by the Countess Jean de Castellane, assisted

by several other ladies. In the assembly, besides Sister Chesnelong, who was the representative of Most Honored Mother Maurice, we noticed in particular M. Raoul Jay, the eminent professor of law, who spoke frequently and ably during the assembly, always at an opportune moment, Canon Couget, sub-director of diocesan works, whose presence shows the good will of the Archbishop towards this work. The presence of the cornette at this gathering where questions of justice as well as charity were discussed, showed that the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul are worthy of their father, who has written this beautiful sentiment: "Do not forget that the virtue of justice comes before the virtue of charity."

The *Annals* has frequently spoken of this work of *rue de l'Abbaye*, and every one knows how much Father Milon was interested in it. His successor excuses himself for his incompetence and asks consideration for the manner in which he renders his report.

The first impression that one gets from the reading of these reports is the vitality of the work. It is indeed a beehive where many industrious bees produce honey and wax. The bees are numerous indeed: 1149 teachers, 3214 commercial industrial employees, 1800 dressmakers, 956 house-maids, and 104 nurses, making a total of 7223 which is a swarm. These bees are likewise very diligent and active in their work. Listen to the hum which this eagerness in working makes. I do not speak of their activity, each in her own sphere, this is seen only by their companions and by God. I speak of their zeal in following the training which is given at *rue de l'Abbaye*. If we compare these courses to the flowers on which our bees settle themselves, we can say with La Fontaine:

To different flowers the busy bees cling,
And make us honey from everything.

For teachers, courses are provided in religious instruction, pedagogy, literature, science and Latin, the last, given by priests. The syndicate of workers has evening courses: courses in cutting and fitting, frequented either at the social centre, or in the sections by 328 pupils,—monthly reunions, courses for catechists and half-days of study. The syndicate of commercial and industrial employees has courses of English and Spanish, highly appreciated and regularly followed. There are numerous courses in stenography (455), in dactylology (490), in commercial French (262), in bookkeeping (210), and even in vocal music. In several sections, courses on the mandolin are advertised, and as some persons were surprised at this, M. Jay remarked with good reason that the mandolin and other musical instruments, when not abused, raise the soul above the baser things of life; and we might add, console it, and frequently drive away the evil spirits, as did David's harp in the case of Saul. The syndicate of nurses has professional courses, given on Thursday evening by Doctor Audollent. There are also courses in mending, ironing and cooking for the pupils of the school of economics.

Let us see now what honey or what wax they produce. From a material point of view, these syndicates realize appreciable results. In 1914, they secured employment for 134 teachers, 178 dressmakers, 449 clerks, 858 domestics, and 181 nurses. This signifies a great deal when one considers that a young girl without a place is exposed to great danger. These syndicates determine the minimum wage and the number of hours for workers; they assure rest on Sunday, they require healthy lodging places, and obtain reduction in the rates for board. At *l'Abbaye*, 35,565 meals were served to the members in 1914, 80 boarders were sheltered, and under certain conditions sent to Avernes, Voulaines, Pornichet, Pen-Bron, those who

needed the sea air or the breath of the woods. In 1914, 60 received for this purpose 75 francs. The war has paralyzed some of these good works, but others have been opened, a workshop for the unemployed where the employees receive one and a half francs a day — a workshop where work is done for our soldiers. The syndicate of teachers has obtained from the Minister of Public Instruction, thanks to the kindness of the Minister of Work, that teachers can organize a class for boys. The syndicates also secure for some, places as secretaries in the organizations begotten by the war. Pascal has said somewhere: “Beehives were as well laid out a thousand years ago, as they are to-day,” but the works in the beehive of *l'Abbaye* differ from those produced by mere instinct. Here are also included the improvement of intellectual works, and one of the principal objects of the assembly at which I had the honor of assisting, was to study methods and means which might be applied to the betterment of the works existing. Views were exchanged, resolutions taken, and then all separated for work. This account would be incomplete if I said nothing of the *queen*, for there is no beehive without its queen bee. In the ordinary beehive, it is hard to reach the queen; now she who presides at the beehive of the syndicate, leads such a hidden life that I wish to respect her shyness. It is enough to know that she is a Daughter of Charity.

February 21—Father Janvier commenced at Notre-Dame his conferences on the effects of charity. At the first he recommended to the generosity of his hearers the work of Louise de Marillac in the parish of Notre-Dame. He will continue at the beginning of his conferences to introduce a similar work, and so we shall see the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul profiting materially by these discourses. Many passages deserve to be published in the

Annals, and would be of a nature to strengthen the Daughters of Charity in the love of their vocation, but space is wanting.

February 25 — To-day the first meeting preparatory to the meeting of the congregation for the cause of the beatification of the Sisters of Arras, was held at Rome. A dispatch notifies us that the Cardinal promoter appeared well pleased at the outcome of this gathering. This gives us some hope.

March 10 — “The Diocesan Congress on Works for the War.” This is of interest to us since the priests and sisters take so active a part in the war. I went to No. 76 *rue des Saints Pères*, to be edified and instructed and at the same time, to edify and instruct the readers of the *Annals*. The meeting began at 9:30 o’clock. His Eminence presided. He is truly tireless, and is found daily at the head of all patriotic and religious demonstrations. Some ecclesiastical and civil personages surrounded His Eminence on the platform. M. Laudet, director of the *Revue hebdomadaire*, spoke first. His rich, eloquent and impassioned address evoked applause and brought forth tears. He spoke of the innumerable works for the soldiers undertaken by France, and then recalled with gratitude those nations who have helped the soldiers, placing in the first rank, the United States. He expressed the gratitude of the young soldiers, and cited some touching extracts from the letters of the officers and soldiers, which contain very complimentary expressions: “In the distribution,” writes a colonel, “I took care of those especially who had no mothers.” — “I thank you,” said a soldier, “I come from Lille.” — “We shall no longer tear the biting frost,” concludes a third. “I am delighted,” says a fourth, “to find myself so well clothed.” The director

also invited the mothers and daughters to continue to knit and to sew for the cavaliers of France.

Canon Couget spoke of the spiritual work done for the soldiers. There are about 300 chaplains, 20 000 priests, and 14 naval chaplains. The letters which we give later on telling the work of the priests, edify us even more, so we pass over rapidly the report which contains many touching incidents, among others the First Communion of a mule-driver, and the Blessed Sacrament in the trenches, close to which every soldier mounted guard on his knees on the eve of battle, and all received from the hand of a deacon in the morning before setting out.

M. Souchon, professor in the law department, made a report on the "Works for the Wounded Soldiers." There are three great works with which a large number of sisters and many of our confrères who are chaplains or infirmarians, are intimately associated: the Society for help for the wounded has 56 000 beds in 773 hospitals; the Union of French Women has 28 000 beds in 442 hospitals; the Ladies of France have 18 000 beds in 368 hospitals. These three works constitute the French Red Cross. They have expended 25 millions, and have gathered together more than 17 000 hospital nurses. May I be permitted to make a digression? — I wish that I were able to state here precisely the number of Saint Vincent's Sisters who are nurses. At the end of November, that is to say, about four months ago, Most Honored Father Villette notified the Holy Father that more than 3000 Sisters were already caring for the wounded soldiers, and the number has increased since then. I close the digression and resume the report of M. Souchon, merely noting those things that concern our Sisters. Report has it that St. Joseph's Hospital ranks first, so admirably organized with its pavilions for isolation of contagious cases, and its 350 beds. It shows how well the Sisters are pre-

pared in times of peace for the duties that come to them in time of war. He made a remark that I consider useful to be noted here: "The hospitals for the wounded are no place for young women," and his Eminence with the authority which his experience and sacred character give him, emphasized this remark, and said word for word: "The reserve which is becoming their age, forbids young women from nursing the wounded soldiers. Ladies, do not let your daughters go into the hospitals; moreover, the rule of the Red Cross forbids them to take young women." It is perhaps useful to quote these words for the readers of the *Annals*. M. Souchon spoke of the work for the "crippled," and he showed as a model La Courneuve, where 40 000 sick have been cared for by the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul. He spoke in particular of a sister who did wonders and whose name he wished to give, but he had been forbidden to do so. M. Souchon finished with the work for convalescents who are installed both in Catholic asylums and in schools, especially, said he, "where the religious of Saint Vincent de Paul are to be found." May we be pardoned the publication of these praises, but if any one be surprised and find it contrary to Saint Vincent's spirit, I refer him to the repetition of prayer of November 11, 1657, where after having praised the two Missionaries Le Vacher, one of whom was then at Saint Lazare, he thus concluded: "Perhaps I do wrong to tell you this, but how! I cannot refrain from speaking of good when I see it." Encouraged then by these words I continue my narrative without scruple. A word was said about the invalids of the war, the beautiful work of M. Barrès. Father Perrin spoke of the instruction and spiritual reading that they were able to give to the wounded, and mentioned the members of the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul, making daily visits to the hospitals of *l'Assistance publique*. The hour was late, the

session of the morning being over, I returned to St. Lazare, and I could not help thinking, assuredly charity reigns in France as she has never reigned before; but God is charity, hence God reigns in France. What joy, what consolation, what encouragement for our priests and our sisters! They are contributing, as the Blessed Virgin had said they would, to reanimate the faith.

The afternoon session began at two o'clock. Besides the parties mentioned above, Canon Collin, of Metz, M. Toussaint and Mlle. Chaptal spoke to us of the poor prisoners. The first presented us "News from the Soldiers," and spoke of the intervention of the Pope in favor of them. The second reported the "Work of Clothing the Prisoners of War."

Canon Dupin gave a resumé of all that had been said about assistance given during the war. We shall merely mention the praise he gave to the National Committee, in which are grouped, in a sacred union, the most notable personages of all creeds and all parties. I note, in passing, that out of 120 Catholic workshops and 67 orphanages assisted by the National Aid, there are 42 workshops and 45 orphanages conducted by the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul. At the end of this report His Eminence called attention to a very urgent and necessary work, that of the "Orphans of the War." The work was placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and some days later, a Mass was celebrated for its intention at Our Lady of Victory. The Cardinal spoke there, and showed how the Blessed Virgin is able to protect a work such as this: "'Mary was the mother of an orphan.' These are the words of Bossuet who was not afraid to apply them to Jesus. 'He came upon this earth as an orphan, for He had no father in this world; Joseph was His teacher, but Jesus was truly an orphan.'" Whilst listening to His Eminence, one might believe that he heard Saint Vincent

speaking to the Ladies of Charity on the duty of caring for little children.

M. Eugene Plantet reviewed a book just published: *Paris charitable pendant la guerre*. The work is divided into three chapters: Works for the Combatants, Works for Non-Combatants, and Works for the Refugees. It is little more than a summary, but how eloquent, for it shows that at the beginning of February 1915, there were two thousand two hundred and five works in Paris for the relief of the victims of the war. This is a number stronger than all figures of rhetoric, and worth more than the most eloquent language. Nevertheless, as the correspondent of *La Croix* of March 11 remarked, "All is not recorded." An eminent priest of Paris said on leaving: "They have said nothing of the multitude of our parish works which are lavish of their gold and their devotion."

The Cardinal interpreted and expressed the feelings of all: of gratitude for the devotion and generosity manifested above all to God, who in this war has worked veritable miracles as well on the battlefield as in the domain of charity; of confidence: a nation so valiant and so charitable can never perish; finally, that of emulation: each of us is indebted to France, to the soldiers, and to the refugees. No one should be able to say at the end of the war that he has done nothing. With these comforting words the session adjourned.

March 21 — To-day some zeppelins came to notify us that spring has begun. We thank them for the information. After the manner of gifts, they launched some bombs. Fortunately, these did not fall on the Cathedral of Paris as those dropped by the taubes in 1914, nor on the houses of the confrères or of the sisters, although some exploded near the houses of the sisters in the suburbs.

THE MISSIONARIES AND THE WAR

MILITARY CHAPLAINS

Letters from REV. L. DUTHOIT

Clermont-en-Argonne, January 21, 1915

I am leaving for Salvange, six kilometres from Clermont, where an ambulance is established in a lonely chateau in the woods. This ambulance, a sister to our own, numbers from sixty to seventy sick, without a priest. The medical corps and the staff of Clermont are broken-hearted at my departure, but we must obey. Their words and their confidence would console me, did I stand in need of consolation.

It is for the weeping sisters, that I regret this change. All went on too well. Our ceremonies were beautiful, graced with the presence of the officers of the staff, and accompanied with the patriotic canticles of Vézère, sung to the well known airs which the soldiers love. I sent them to Father Coury, for St. Louis.

I shall still look after the sisters. I am entitled to a horse; so, as the roads, it seems, are very bad, I shall ask General X, my penitent, for an old one, that, like myself is somewhat tired of life, and which, like me asks himself when will all this be at an end. I shall sweeten his old days as he will mine. I shall practise largely the good plan of concessions, and whether he goes to the right or to the left, I shall ask him only one thing not to throw me to the ground. I was in need of a horse. Thanks to you, very dear Father, I have known almost all the good things of this life, and this one was about to escape me.

I shall see the sisters frequently for I shall bring them my linen, but this is a grave question, as I had among the fever cases, three or four covered with vermin, and these were generously shared with me.

The ambulance to which I am going is directed by a Jew, Dr. Proust, a fine broad-minded man. It seems he asked for me. He has been practising here some time and is very skillful. He is a professor of the Faculty of Paris and it was he who saved M. Caillaux, by victoriously attacking the physicians of Calmette. He is very polite and deferential towards the chaplain, and has communicated the same tone to the other majors. I shall write you as soon as I shall be able to judge of the place.

I shall live as an old bachelor, but as one who has a horse and an orderly. I presume, very dear Father, that you will authorize me to take from my pay the expenses that this horse will probably occasion; besides I shall take lessons with the mounted chaplains.

I hope to leave at my departure, as a farewell gift, the twenty steres of wood, claimed by Barres, and which he will surely obtain; but I reserve my share of Salvange in order that all my soldiers may have their coffins.

Salvange, January 27.

Salvange! This is the name of a chateau transformed into an ambulance, having thirty or forty beds. At the distance of one kilometre, through the fields, there is another ambulance of twenty or thirty beds that I shall visit. It is called the Tuileries, and is also a chateau.

I eat at the majors' table, and I shall pay my share. They promise to pay me as the others, dating from the month of August, so with that I shall be able to settle all my affairs. On Sunday I shall arrange the services at Froidos, where there are eight hundred soldiers. God does well all that He does. I am still at Clermont without actually being there, as I have a horse and a carriage to take me there daily, if I wish, and twice a day two soldiers go there for food; so I shall continue my ministry.

Father Duthoit afterwards relates the annoyances which certain persons caused him. Our excellent confrère bore joyfully these things in a supernatural manner. He wrote :

It is the beautiful part of the heritage promised by the good Master. Our Lord does not wish His instruments to do good without some trouble.

I am very happy at Salvange because I am busy. The head physician is perfect, one of the majors is a saint, and three others are good Christians. We have very amiable discussions at table, innocent mirth; some days ago the head physician laughed till he cried. When I first appeared at table in my cassock astonishment was reflected on every countenance, and their looks seemed a formidable interrogation point. You can guess the question : *quis est hic*? But Providence always comes to my rescue, so when Doctor Guibert, my friend, declared that I was a good boy, it was my diploma, and now I am one of the family. I shake hands with all on entering, and I am given the place of honor.

At the risk of wearying you, I shall add that I am very well. I am thin but for that reason I am better able to work.

Notwithstanding the snow, the fighting continues every day. I live at the gardener's where I have a heated room and I am treated like a prince. That becomes a hero, for it appears I have been a hero. Do not smile. I knew nothing of it myself, but is not natural heroism the most praiseworthy? What I know is that I spent a fearful quarter of an hour and I was very much afraid, but that would not count against my heroism.

But I must go to the Tuileries, and it is snowing. This is the heroic side. I smile as becomes a hero. Thanks to the Sisters, I go supplied with tobacco and pastilles, and as says George Sand, "I draw all hearts after me." I am

profusely grateful so that they may not tire in their generosity, nor break the tie that unites us.

Barrès, by his postscript, informs me that he has obtained some boards for coffins. New Year's day I interred fifteen without coffins. It falls to my lot to notify the poor widows. What beautiful answers I receive!

When I was leaving Clermont, the Superioress made me ashamed. I had received among the wounded, two miserable men, who have since died, they were covered with vermin, I too had my share. What exclamations! The sisters on meeting me kept a respectful distance which increased my mortification, but finally had me drenched with hot water, like a poor potato, so I am now free from vermin.

But here at Salvange I have fleas; I confide this to you as a secret, for you will pity me, and understand, since your hero lodges with a gardener.

I wish that all the paving stones of Paris and all the flakes of snow were voices with which to thank you for having sent me here, notwithstanding my youth. My gratitude shall endure throughout eternity, in which I shall deposit at your feet some thousands of the rays from my aureola, which will surely count millions.

It has taken me five days to scribble this letter. Will you be able to decipher it? Do not complain, as all heroes write badly; witness Napoleon the First, Alexander, Pericles, Plato and all those around us, as a good sister said.

Above all, do not get sick; that is not heroic, it is even very commonplace, and I wish that you be an exception as

Your affectionate and grateful hero,

DUTHOIT

Ambulance 5—55, Sector 7,
Sunday, March 15, 1915

VERY DEAR AND MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing if you please!

Thanks for your portrait which will if possible render you still more present to my thoughts.

There is an attack, and the arrivals of wounded and dead succeed each other! What a sight! The corridors are filled with these unfortunates who groan on the stretchers, impatiently awaiting their turn to have their wounds dressed.

I believe the enemy will finally seize this terrible Vauquois and the hill 263 which overlooks the road to Varennes, thus enabling them to cut off the food supply from Montfaucon.

The departure of our head physician who asked to be sent to Serbia is a real calamity. Who will replace him? Pray fervently for this intention.

Father Théveny has just returned to the Islettes; he writes that they have received four hundred wounded. He now sees what life in an ambulance at the front is, but no matter how we view it, what blessings are bestowed upon a chaplain at such a post. I shall not leave my second ambulance to-morrow, as arrivals are expected there.

I attribute my power of endurance to the regiments of soldiers that I have sent forward into Purgatory. There are hours of extreme weariness when one would gladly sit down or sleep, but an emergency whips up the old mule who starts off again.

May God have pity on me!

Truly yours in our Lord,

DUTHOIT

A letter from Father Théveny informs us that he is appointed titular chaplain, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Geoffroy de Grandmaison.

March 24, 1915

SIR AND MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing if you please!

I have just received your photograph, enclosed in a kind letter from Father Duthoit. I know not why, but I interpret the package and the inscription as a delicate and paternal reproach for my long silence, since January 24. I most humbly offer you my excuses.

Notwithstanding appearances, my heart and my prayers unite with the thanksgivings of my confrères, for the restoration of your health.

After some days of respite which followed my last letter and the continual going and coming from one encampment to another, I have been temporarily appointed to the central hospital for the contagious of X, where there are from 2500 to 3000 cases of typhus and scarlet fever. The work is as consoling as wearing. I was the only chaplain, and was not able to attend to all. From the time of my arrival, the bishop, distressed at the situation, had spoken to the administration who ordered an investigation, for which purpose an officer was sent from head quarters. I was called, and in presence of the chief doctor I exposed the situation. Some days later my Christian name and rank were demanded. This was my nomination, and my appointment to the forty-second division, 32d corps, arrived later, dated the 16th.

I am at my new post since yesterday. It is a new life, and no longer that of a chaplain of an ambulance, but consists in running under the bombs, from one relief post to the other.

I fear them less than the responsibilities of my situation, for God gives me a keen appreciation of my insufficiency, but in His infinite goodness He has added thereto a great confidence in His grace. This confidence is inspired by the thought that I did nothing to put myself here or there, so I can count on your prayers and those of our little Company. I was heartily welcomed by my General of the division, who is a daily communicant.

Another mark of the tenderness of God. This morning, on entering the church of St. F... the place where we are encamped, I found myself face to face with Father Dusuel. We were delighted at the meeting and embraced with tears of joy. We shall see each other frequently on the field which is twenty-five kilometres or more from Father Du-thoit's post. Luckily I have had some vague news, here and there, of the Company, but it is very little.

When will this horrible war have an end? I am weary of these heartrending scenes! However, least of all, should I complain. Our stretcher-bearer priests lead a life of which no one can form an idea. They are worthy of admiration. And our young seminarians and students, what becomes of them? Shall we not have to weep for many of them after the war? My appointment places me on an equality with that of a captain of a four years' grade.

I beg you, Sir and Most Honored Father, to recommend me to the prayers of the Community, and to accept the homage of my most profound and filial respect.

THEVENY

Military Chaplain,

42d division of Infantry, 32d corps.

Postal sector 35.

Besides the chaplains of whom we have spoken, others, as Father Grégoire, expect to be utilized and sent to the front; others, as Father Constant, are appointed to an ambulance. The latter wrote to the Most Honored Father the 26th of March, that he had just been named chaplain of the temporary hospital 35, 141 St. John's

Court, Bordeaux. He boards in the house and is charged to organize religious worship in the chapel and to give the succors of religion to the sick Catholics. The personnel of the ambulance includes ten doctors, some sisters, infirmarians, and about fifteen soldier-priests.

INFIRMARIAN STRETCHER-BEARERS

The letter in which Father Bizart tells of finding Father Duriez wounded, is unfortunately lost, but the following letter dated March 24, is from the same to the Superior General.

SIR AND MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

It seems to me I am dreaming. I am writing from the home of our confrère, Father Larigaldie, and on the eve of a family feast which I expected to celebrate sad and lonely in my poor church of St. Jean-sur-Tourbe, now transformed into an ambulance. You see how the good God spoils me. To-morrow, I shall say Mass at our Sisters', and imagine myself with my school-fellows returned from the barracks, at the Community as in 1902, when I pronounced my holy vows in the chapel of Rue du Bac. Could Father Bayol, who is at Epernay, again visit me the illusion would be complete, since in 1902, he was also at Rue du Bac, where he pronounced his holy vows at the Mass of our dear and venerated Father Fiat.

Fifteen days ago we left St. Jean. Our personnel was exhausted and it was time to take a little rest. From St. Jean, we went to Courtesols near Châlons, where I experienced much joy. Every evening I preached and gave

Benediction in the large church of St. Martin. Numerous souls returned to God, and on the feast of St. Joseph a great number of soldiers made their Easter. We thought to remain there some time, but we were obliged to leave unexpectedly. I arrived here not knowing that I would find our sisters and a confrère at Vertus. What was my joy on learning this good news! We sent for Father Bayol, and together we formed for a time, a little family of Lazarists and Sisters of Charity. How long will this furlough last? I know not, but I shall carry with me the charm of the maternal welcome of Sister Larigaldie and her brother. It does me good to live over again even for a while, a Community life, when for months together, I am so utterly alone.

Far from me be any complaint. In my heart I feel myself privileged. I have perfect freedom to exercise my ministry, and what a ministry with the poor wounded and dying who await only the kind word of the priest! Even while on furlough I am not out of work. Sometimes before going into the churches, either large or small, to speak to crowds of soldiers and civilians, I have not time to put on the soutane; and I hear the whisper, "He is a missionary." I am proud of it, not for my own sake, as I am nothing, but for the family of St. Vincent which is loved by all. Oh! how truly happy I am to belong to this family, and how I long for the blessed hour when I shall resume my former duties of confrère and professor. Sometimes it seems to me that hour will never come. On returning from Perthes, Mesnil or Minaucourt, when our ears are filled with the infernal noise of cannon, our eyes wearied with the sight of the mutilated and wounded, we can hardly believe that a time will come when this noise will be stilled, or these miseries no longer seen.

May the holy will of God be done! More than once I believed that my last hour had come; but shot have

spared me, and bursting bombs have not even scratched me. I conclude I am not worthy to be a martyr. It only remains for me to live in my little corner, to preach, to administer the sacraments, and await the day of freedom and of victory.

I am happy to learn that my school-fellow, Father Duriez, whom I received, after four years of separation, at Saint-Jean under tragic circumstances, is now in the South; he has seen Father Delanghe, our old director of studies. A wound such as Father Duriez's might almost be desired, could we experience a like happiness.

Excuse this long talk, and above all, bless me, for I have great need of the divine protection.

I remain, Sir and Most Honored Father, your very devoted son,

P. BIZART,
Postal Sector, 137.

March 29, 1915 Father Bizart wrote the following lines.

At Vertus, Father Larigaldie and I formed plans. A little more and we would have undertaken a mission . . . when behold, on Saturday morning, I was obliged to set out unexpectedly with scarcely time to thank the Superioress, Sister Larigaldie, who has been such a mother to me, and to embrace her brother on jumping out of bed. We arrived here at Fère-Champenoise, a little fatigued. To my great joy, I found some sisters who kindly placed the missionary's room at my disposal. I was especially happy to be able to say Mass, yesterday, Palm Sunday.

Dear Sister Harlay, the Superioress, related to me the different scenes through which she passed during the invasion. She was fortunately inspired to send her sisters and young girls away. Since their return, our sisters have rendered good service to the army. Their house serves as an ambulance or infirmary for the soldiers who guard the

railroad, as well as for the soldiers passing through from the rear. The works in favor of youth seem to be flourishing. I presided at the reunion of the Children of Mary and gave a conference. I was delighted with the good behavior and piety of these young girls.

This evening, at eleven o'clock, we shall leave by railroad. We know not our destination, whether to the North or to Alsace. One thing is certain, that the first corps did not rest long and is again on the go.

May God assist us and give us health. For eight months we have been active, and I am astonished to find myself able to endure so easily all these privations and fatigues. Truly the Virgin Immaculate and Saint Vincent are watching over their children.

Notwithstanding my absence, I am deeply interested in all that concerns the Congregation. At Vertus, I devoured the last number of the *Annals*. How I admire the devotedness of all. I perceive that, I am certainly not the most fervent or devoted; still, I have tried to do my little share of good. I believe, even, that I am the only one who, though not appointed as regular chaplain and not wearing the soutane, has been able to celebrate Mass, to hear confessions, preach and bury the dead, as I have done since my appointment to the ambulance. I am, perhaps the only one of my confrères who from the beginning has been constantly at the front. I tell you this only to show you how God has protected me from shot, shell and sickness.

I expect from you, Most Honored Father, your best blessing, this will be my little Paschal present.

Your very devoted and grateful

P. BIZART

April 15, 1915.

With intense gratitude I received your last two letters. A word from a father to his absent children is always a consolation; for me it is a real joy!

We did not remain a long time in the rear. I was too happy with our sisters, and I was not able to spend Easter there. After eight days marching, we arrived in the East on Holy Saturday. Easter Sunday, our soldiers sang the Mass in three parts. I shall never forget it. I spent Easter week in the confessional and I think we had more than a thousand Communions. I was hoarse and could scarcely speak, but in presence of this crowd I found my voice. God be praised for furnishing me with the opportunity of doing a little good. The returns of strayed souls could be counted by the wholesale. How wonderful this is, but the mysterious recesses of the soul are always the same and are easily divined, for in truth, the school of the Cross develops the best that is in us. What surprises me is to find in a regiment, which encamps with us at present, a veritable group of Franciscan tertiaries. One of the captains is the soul of it, and a priest of the diocese of Arras, a simple soldier, the director. These gentlemen assemble in the captain's room and perform their pious exercises as if they were in a chapel. You should hear them in the evening! At the sight of such transports, so much zeal, I am moved with a pious envy. And yet it is said that France is impious! I assure you that there is a brave and mystical side to France of which I never dreamed, and considering all this, my conviction is that God cannot resist the volley of prayer which ascends to Him, and that He will soon give us a glorious peace. Excuse these details. They will interest you, nevertheless, since they are from an eye-witness.

Bless again your son at the front, so that should he die,

he may give his life courageously, and conduct himself as behooves a good missionary.

Yours very affectionately in our Lord.

P. BIZART.

Father Duriez is a missionary of Ibagué in Colombia; he belonged to the stretcher-bearers of the 3rd division. He was fulfilling his duties when a bomb burst near him, killing three stretcher-bearers and seriously wounding a major. He writes from the village of Nay, near the Pyrenees.

*Letter of FATHER DURIEZ, C. M., to the
VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General*

Nay, March 22, 1915.

MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

You have learned from Father Louwyck that I have been in the hospital of Pau for treatment, having received some slight wounds from a bomb. After remaining about twenty days at Pau, I was sent to a hospital for convalescents at Nay.

At Pau, they extracted the little pieces of shell from my forehead and chest. A radiograph of my shoulder was taken in order to locate the pieces of shell as they could not be discovered by probing. The radiograph revealed a splinter a little larger than a small pea, and two tiny pieces which had lodged at the upper extremity of the left arm near the bone, without touching it. This German merchandise annoyed me a little, but from what I understand it will give no more trouble, so it is decided not to remove it. The wound of the shoulder which appeared healed, reopened yesterday, but probably this will be nothing.

I have learned from a letter from the front, that not only two, but three of my companion stretcher-bearers

were killed, by the same bomb which wounded me; also that the young assistant doctor wounded at the same time, died the following day. Truly, I have been the object of a particular Providence, being only four metres distant from the explosion. I attribute this special protection of Providence to the intercession of the little Sister Thérèse of the Infant Jesus of Lisieux, whom I had invoked some moments before, without thinking much of the danger which I did not believe so near.

The hospital of Nay is installed in the seminary of the diocese. One of the gentlemen of the seminary remains here, and he could not be kinder to me. He wishes me to occupy the room of one of his confrères and eat at his table, etc., etc. He procured me a carriage ride the day before yesterday, to Bétharam, nine kilometres from here, and next week we shall go to Lourdes. As you see, Most Honored Father, I am here far from cellars and barns, and from the spiritual and material privations of the front. I am truly a spoiled child of Providence.

After my convalescence, before reporting at the recruiting station, I shall have a week's leave of absence. This I shall be happy to spend at the Mother House which I have not visited in eleven years: then rejoin our division and then???—If after all these interrogation points, I am alive, I shall ask permission to return to Colombia. Hoping that you will not refuse me, I have the honor to be, Most Honored Father, in our Lord and Saint Vincent,

Your very obedient son,

L. DURIEZ

Another stretcher-bearer has been seriously wounded; Father Barbet of the Berceau of Saint Vincent de Paul, of whom mention was made in the last number of the *Annals*.

Here are different letters received on the subject of his wounds.

January 3, Father Barbet himself wrote from Compiègne to the Superior General.

January 6, 1915.

MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please !

This morning I reached Compiègne and am very comfortable in the auxiliary hospital 34, situated in the convent of the Compassion. I expect to remain here until I am sufficiently recovered to be sent farther on, probably to the South. In a few days I shall write you some details concerning my wounds. In the meantime, kindly give me a special blessing; pray for me and request many others to do likewise. I am very well off here in every respect, and, moreover, resigned to the holy will of God.

In the love of our Lord and of His Immaculate Mother, I have the honor to be, Most Honored Father,

Your very respectful and obedient child,

PAUL BARBET

On January 20, 1915, the commander of the first battalion, of the fourth zouaves, wrote to Most Honored Father Villette, as follows :

REVEREND SUPERIOR,

I am deeply touched by the affectionate words you have had the kindness to address to me; and, at the same time, I am happy to write you that the doctors are confident of the recovery of our poor friend, the gloriously wounded Father Barbet.

You know, without doubt, under what circumstances he was wounded. In a desperate fight, observing some hesitation in a section where an assault was being made, and fearing a failure, he dashed outside the trench, with his crucifix in his hand, crying out: "Forward!" and at the head of his comrades who were electrified by the heroism of this sweet and gentle companion, he hurled himself on the German trenches.

From the opening of the campaign, not a day passed in which his life was not in danger; and I have often been obliged kindly to reprimand him for his admirable but imprudent bravery. He knows my tender affection for him personally, as well as for his virtues; and I am certain that when he is entirely cured, he will return to me; this will be for my battalion and for myself a happy day. But I have a request to make you: namely that you will not permit his return to the front, until he is completely cured. I beg you to remember me to him when you see him, and request him to send me some news when he is able. Kindly accept for yourself, Reverend Superior, the homage of my devoted respect,

COMMANDER CAZENAVE,
1st battalion, 4th regiment,
Sector 132.

Some days later, the *Official Journal* of the French Republic, for January 31, 1915, contained the following lines:

At the Ministry of War was seen the decree of August 13, 1914.

Attention:

The following names are inscribed on special roll for the military medal:

In the first rank on January 2, 1915:

Barbet, corporal stretcher-bearer of the 4th regiment of Zouaves. At the moment when one section dashed out of the trench to attack a German station, Barbet hastened to the assistance of a wounded lieutenant: then, by word and gesture, encouraging the soldiers deprived of their chief, he hurried them on even to the German trenches, where he fell wounded by four bullets.

We quote from a page of the journal, *Le Temps*, for February 26, the following lines, signed by Dr. Francis Helme, which states exactly the organization that exists at the farm of Offémont, where our dear confrère was first taken.

In a well sheltered corner of a narrow and dark valley, an ambulance has been installed at some hundred metres from our trenches. On the crest, the grand though infernal music of our batteries, resounds both by day and night. A little lower an improvised cemetery has been adorned by one of our soldiers, a sculptor, with a beautiful column of exquisite design around which, arranged in rows, are the tombstones with their old French names engraved thereon. Nearby is a green sward where some of the sections, in hours of rest, play football. It is wonderful to watch them hurl the ball between our volleys of shot.

At the farther end of the wooded valley, on the Offémont farm, a stable, similar to the stable of Bethlehem, has been arranged with great care and intelligence for those who are to undergo serious operations. One morning a portly sergeant from Lyons was received. He was simply heroic; and the general-in-chief, whom all love as a father, decorated him with a military medal, the golden ribbon of which never appeared to me more beautiful. His superiors came to congratulate him; and, in our turn, we did likewise; but he, with the roguish air of his own *Croix-Rousse*, interrupted us to introduce his neighbor Father Barbet who occupied the next bed: "Keep," said he, "a little for my companion. He is more stylish than I." The companion, with his bald head, his long black beard, pale face, half-closed eyes, and long arms reminded one of an old statue. Having shaken hands, I presented to him my noble companion, Dr. Carrère, the well-known specialist, who has left the Rockefeller Laboratory, in New York, to care for our wounded. A sweet smile welcomed the celebrated name as Father Barbet replied: "Oh, I have done nothing, any one could have done as much: but permit me, a poor Lazarist, to thank Divine Providence for according me the pleasure of your visit; for no one else could accomplish so much for the good of humanity."

We would wish, before closing, to cite some of the letters received by Father Barbet, particularly those addressed to him by the colonel, by the chief of the battalion, by the head doctor; but not being authorized to do so, we shall content ourselves by saying that, thanks to the efforts of Father Hertault, Father Barbet has been removed to the ambulance of the Mother House of the Sisters of Charity, and that he has deposited his military medal at the feet of the all powerful Virgin, in gratitude for the protection of this good Mother.

Letter from Father Baetman to our Most Honored Father, February 20, 1915 :

Since my last letter, quite a change has taken place in my life. I have been removed from the service of the typhus patients and entered in the rôle of corporal infirmarian in an annex, where I have fifty convalescents to care for and to love; both of which duties are easy to perform.

The hospital in which I am stationed was founded by an extremely liberal and generous Israelite. He said to me, at the time of our first meeting: "My friend, I am going to make to you my profession of faith. Incidentally, by birth I am a Jew, but I am nevertheless very liberal. You are a soldier and a priest, do then everything possible for these men confided to you; not only do I not oppose you, but I am entirely at your disposal if you need me."

This great effort to fulfil an ideal of devotion and charity appears to me most beautiful and perhaps, one of the results of the war. How often have I come into personal contact with similar cases! L. Veuillot said somewhere, "There are benedictions of God which enter houses by breaking the windows." This war will be for France such a benediction!

We who have lived with our soldiers, who have seen their souls unmasked, and read the very depths of their hearts, I confess, at times, are moved even to tears. Such

as I saw them on the battlefield, and in the trenches, such do I find them on their beds in the hospital, and one point particularly worthy of notice, is their union among themselves, their frank intimacy and their childlike gaiety. They always wear a smile even under fire and in suffering. What confidence they have in the priest! Towards me, they show the most delicate kindness. It is true, they see that I love them, and render them all the service in my power, but they act in like manner toward me.

Every Sunday, they all attend Mass and Benediction, and consider it an honor to sing the hymns. It is a pleasure to remark the heartfelt manner in which they throw their whole soul into the rendition of these canticles. Their breasts are decked with medals. I never try to influence them nor to proselytize. They know that I am a priest and they come to confide to me their pains, to relate their annoyances and to ask counsel.

On Saturday evening, I am alone in a sort of a little office adjoining their ward. They come in numbers to confession. This is quickly done. It is: "I did so, and so, and so, that is all!" Last Sunday, when one of them made his first holy Communion, thirty-two accompanied him to the Holy Table, and, I assure you, I had not suggested it to them. This first Communicant, instructed in haste, had been somewhat prepared by a lad from Paris, twenty-two years old, baptized during his illness, who had asked permission to take charge of this work, "in order," said he, "to thank God, for the grace of faith granted to me." This young man on the evening of his First Communion day asked permission to communicate every day "so as to retrieve lost time."

Behold, Father, the exact conditions of my life at present. Assist me by your prayers, that I may not be altogether unworthy of the good which God wishes to effect through me. Give me also a blessing from your fatherly

heart, and be so kind as to communicate this letter to our
“Grandfather” Fiat and to Father Louwyck.

J. BAETEMAN.

March 30, 1915, Father J. Baeteman again addresses our Most
Honored Father Villette the following consoling details :

Up to the present, I have been obedient to your advice,
I have not yet been killed; and I will probably remain
alive, unless a taube in making almost daily visits this way,
finally reaches me. Apart from that, all goes on well.
God consoles me by permitting me to do much good for
the benefit of those about me. It would take a volume to
tell you all; but it is evident that for many, the war will
prove a great grace. Perhaps some day I shall be able to
write it all, this beautiful hymn to the mercy of God. A
soldier said the other day to a lady: “Our corporal is a
curé, but we adore him.” Poor men, they will at least be
able to say later, that they found on their way a priest
whom they loved.

Our ambulance is conducted by some excellent Jews,
who evince toward me the greatest courtesy and charity.
They have many times confessed that they would be most
grateful to me if I could but give them the faith. God
has certainly placed me in truly peculiar circumstances.
May I not, by my own miseries, be an obstacle to the good
that He requires of me! I lately succeeded, through cor-
respondence, in persuading the brother of one of our
wounded, a soldier from Argonne, to study our religion;
he was baptized, a little later, near the front. All this
gives me much joy.

Kindly grant me your choicest blessing, and permit me
to recommend myself to your prayers.

In Jesus and Mary Immaculate, your filial and respectful

J. BAETEMAN,
Corporal-infirmarian.

Letter from Brother Forsans of the house of Smyrna, February 21, 1915:

Many thanks for your welcome card, delivered to me while before the enemy, and which was for me a source of sensible pleasure. Although it appears certain that the war will be of long duration, merciless, and replete with fearful sacrifice, we are, notwithstanding all, resolutely confident of its final success. It will be a matter of time, of patience and of tenacity of purpose; qualities, which, *a priori*, are scarcely compatible with the French character. Nevertheless the courage of the soldier even under fire, his unalterable good humor even in the water and mud of the trenches, as well as his daily acts of heroism, are for us a sure guarantee of victory. I am simply doing my duty as a true Frenchman. I have not had the good fortune of shedding my blood for my country like the heroic Father Barbet, whose great generosity I so much admire, and whom I beg God to grant a speedy recovery. My life is worth nothing to me, if it can be useful for the salvation of France.

J. B. FORSANS,
Stretcher-bearer,
4th Moroccan Brigade.

Just as these *Annals* were going to press, the following letters concerning Brother Poix of whom mention was before made, were received.

Letter from ABBE PRIEUR, *Military Chaplain, to*
VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, *Superior General.*

In the Field, April 29, 1915.

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

I have the painful task of notifying you of the glorious death of Brother Henri-Paul Poix, stretcher-bearer in the divisionary group of the twelfth division, who was mortally wounded a few minutes ago.

Remarkable for his calmness, unalterable patience, and constant devotedness, Brother Poix is regretted by all his comrades.

This morning, while at some distance from the line of battle, ready to set out in search of the wounded, three shells fell near him striking one of his companions in the leg and wounding our good Brother in the head. After a first-aid dressing of his wounds, he was taken to the neighboring ambulance whither he had conducted so many of his comrades, and there he soon expired.

As I am employed in another place, I only learned later the details of this glorious death.

I leave to you the care if you judge it well, of informing his family. The official notice of his death will be made in due time. As soon as I receive more precise details from the chaplain of the ambulance I shall consider it a duty to communicate them to you.

Kindly accept my sincere sympathy as also the assurance of my religious respect.

J. PRIEUR,
Military Chaplain,
Group of Stretcher-bearers
S. P. 33

The following day April 30, Father Prieur wrote again as follows:

MOST HONORED FATHER,

We have just rendered the last honors to Brother Poix. On the news of his death, our head doctor set out on horseback to claim his body. Yesterday evening, it was placed in the church of Rupt-en-Woëvre, Meuse, where lying on a stretcher, it remained all night before the altar of the Holy Virgin, while his companions volunteered to keep watch. This morning a coffin was made and a grave dug in the parish cemetery. In the meantime, some of the stretcher-bearers twined a crown of ivy and hawthorn, while an

officer went to the neighboring village to purchase a crown which the officials, the under officers and the men donated.

At three o'clock, the obsequies took place. On the funeral pall were two pennants: one, of the tri-color, the other, of the red cross.

The entire company, headed by the officers and the chief doctor, attended. One of the chaplains, an excellent musician, did the singing. Before the last absolution, I preached, taking as my theme: "Saint Vincent de Paul, patron of stretcher-bearers, by whose spirit our dear comrade was so deeply animated." May we likewise be more and more animated thereby. At the cemetery, the chief doctor said a few words dictated by the most tender sentiments. The Reverend Curé also assisted at the ceremony.

I have not as yet been able to see the chaplain who received the last sigh of this dear child.

Kindly accept my respectful homage.

PRIEUR,
Military Chaplain.

OUR AMBULANCE INFIRMARIANS

Letter from Rev. J. Leflon, C. M., to Very Rev. E. Villette, Superior General.

January 28, 1915.

The news of your recent illness has caused me deep pain. I have, however, been greatly consoled since I heard that your health daily improves. May it be completely restored for the greater good of our two Communities! I am praying for this intention.

Your letter and that of Father Louwyck dispersed for a while the clouds that overshadow my life. Father

Meuffels, of Panningen, has sent me a newsy and real brotherly letter.

I believe that Prêmesques must be evacuated. My family inform me that they have taken shelter at Lille. The poor North is severely tried.

My life in camp is most monotonous. I work during the day, and in the evening, Father Paul Duthoit, professor at the Theological Seminary of Saint Saulve, gives us an hour in moral theology. But how I long for my return to France!

Kindly remember me, Most Honored Father, to our confrères. I am, in the love of our Lord,

Your very respectful son,

J. B. LEFLON.

Catholic Priest, prisoner of war,
1st Battalion, 2d Company, Barrack G.

Gefangenenlager, Gardelegen.

Province of Sachsen, Germany.

For a long time we were without news from these confrères, but on the 4th of May, our Most Honored Father Villette received the following card signed by Father Lambin, but not written by him.

Gardelegen, April 16, 1915.

Father Leflon died April 9, a victim of his devotedness to the sick. His mother lives with a widow, Madame Deprez, at Witte-Cohem, near Aire-sur-la-Lys, Pas-de-Calais. It is impossible for me to write to her or to say any more at present to you.

LAMBIN.

Father J. B. Leflon was born November 30, 1876, at Prêmesques, diocese of Cambrai. He completed his preparatory studies in the seminary of Hazebrouck; his superior rendered the following testimony of him: piety, very solid; character, serious and energetic; talents above

the ordinary, with imagination and fervor in his style; conduct, excellent. He entered the Congregation, September 7, 1896; he was ordained priest in 1903 and was placed as missionary at Rongy, in Belgium. He has always been an honor to the Congregation not only by his moral qualities but also by his wonderful talent in preaching.

*Letter from FATHER SCAMPS, C. M., to VERY
REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General.*

Saint Riquier, March 12, 1915.

SIR AND MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

Kindly excuse my prolonged silence, which was due neither to forgetfulness, nor want of good will, but rather to a certain timidity. Notwithstanding, I have not neglected my duty towards you, and it has been sweet to pray for you each day, especially since I learned of your serious illness. This assurance, I hope, will prove to you, Most Honored Father, the love and devotion of your humble and distant son.

After a short stay in the hospital, where I was taken for an attack of quinsy, I am now in the interior, but I shall be sent to some sanitary center in the South. Efforts are now being made to get me to our confrères at Dax, and perhaps they may be successful; if so, how happy I shall be, and I trust that in your paternal kindness, you will not reproach me for indicating this house of our confrères before consulting you, as I did not believe it possible that I should be permitted to leave Saint-Riquier. No matter where I am sent, I will never cease to live united to my dear Congregation, and to desire most ardently the day, when I shall have the happiness of consecrating myself anew to the works of the little Company,

for this war and the change in France have made me appreciate more than ever my dear vocation, and to love and esteem it above all else.

To-morrow, Saturday, I shall leave here. Believe me, always in the love of Jesus and Mary Immaculate,

Your very respectful and dutiful child,

LEON SCAMPS.

We here give extracts from other letters⁷ sent us by our Ambulance-Infirmarians :

Our situation continues the same, writes one, it threatens to last forever. It would be most depressing, if there were not souls to gain and benefits to be procured for France.

Work is not wanting, writes another, but it brings its reward. I abandon myself entirely to Divine Providence, and experience nothing but tenderness.

The greater number feel their separation from the Company, and long to resume its works. They recall their confrères so exposed to danger on the field of battle, and whenever possible, offer the Holy Sacrifice for them. In hospitals under the direction of religious, our confrères receive every possible kindness and attention. All are charmed with their sick and wounded, and speak of the numerous confessions and communions, and how the Blessed Sacrament is borne with honor into places where it was before condemned.

Several among them are expecting to leave for the front in a short time, and are not at all disturbed at the prospect. "I shall be most happy," says one, "when I can go to the front, there to exercise more actively my ministry as a priest and missionary." Another writes: "If God calls me to the battlefield, I will accept all the sufferings there found, for the prosperity of the little Company, and I will endeavor to prove myself a worthy son of Saint Vincent." *Father Martin*, at Castelnau-dary, attends the German wounded. "I am in direct attendance on them," he says, "since I daily renew the dressings on their wounds, some of which are very serious." *Father Rul* is in constant contact with the wounded officers who, as is generally the case, are interested in religious discussions or in questions in theology; so he endeavors to sow

some good seed among them. *Father Mantelet* is at Hospital 31, formerly the Seminary of Sens, attending those stricken with contagious diseases. He writes:

I thank God that this post of honor has been reserved for me. Work, alas there is no lack of it! First, we had those suffering from tetanus, now we have typhoid, scarlet fever and dysentery among the patients. My service includes a number of very serious diseases. We care for them as best we can, and God restores them to health when it pleases Him. Those whom He calls to Himself, die in the best dispositions, full of faith and resignation. This is now a great mission where the firing cannon preaches, and we gather in abundant fruit. Within three months, things have wonderfully changed; sectarianism is disappearing, and prejudices have vanished. There are four services in the hospital, with a priest at the head of each. I tell you, with the aid of grace, we are giving the devil some trouble.

I know, my Most Honored Father, that you do not forget any of your children, however, let me recommend to your prayers and to those of the dear Seminary, our patients in Hospital 31, and also their poor infirmarian. I hardly have time to pray, days and nights are spent in applying lotions, giving baths, in fact, in all sorts of services, interrupted by absolutions and extreme unctions; and all, while wearing the red pants and white blouse of a nurse.

Thank God, few of our infirmarians have been seriously ill. Some of our confrères are being trained for their work as nurses, at the various army headquarters. "There are four hundred of us here," writes Brother Dechéne, "fifty being priests. Every day we have instructions to fit us for our new work, and the sergeant makes them very interesting." Another writes: "There are more than five hundred priests here; we wear our cassocks in the barracks. Some days it is so amusing, we almost die laughing." In another place, a missionary from a distant country writes:

"We are a hundred, with nothing to do, but wait and grow weary. We are sixty priests, but as there are very few altars, it is almost impossible to say Mass every day. Up to the present I had to be content with assisting at Mass and receiving Holy Communion. Some rise as early as two o'clock in the morning."

THE ROAD INFIRMARIANS

On March 24, 1915, Father Genouville wrote to our Most Honored Father :

MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

I am constantly moving. We have yet two new journeys to make, and tomorrow morning we return to Châlons.

Our work is so hard that sometimes our strength is exhausted; lifting the wounded on and off the trains, the unusual arrangement of the coaches, and everything for our use, or for the use of the wounded; in fine, labor of all kinds, besides many interior trials and privations. We offer all these sacrifices for the preservation of France, and for the salvation of our wounded. I must return to my train.

Please to accept, etc.

LOUIS GENOUVILLE.

Letters from Father Pehau, C. M., to Very Rev. E. Villette, Superior General.

March 1, 1915.

Perhaps you have already learned through Father Poupart, that I am no longer at Aubervilliers. We are can-

tonned at Nogent-sur-Oise. Here our life is nearly the same as at Aubervilliers, but the food is better and we have a little more liberty. Here also the Daughters of Charity give us hospitality, and we have the happiness of daily celebrating Mass, returning quietly before the roll-call at eight o'clock.

In the beginning Father Lasserre and I were together, but later, were separated, each being placed in a different section. We are attached to a health-train which runs whenever there are many wounded to be transported.

There are nearly six hundred infirmarians here, among whom are a number of priests. Some of these are former pupils of our confrères and fail not to testify their attachment to us. For the fifth time, my address has been changed, and doubtless it will soon be changed again.

March 25, 1915.

One of our corporals who is a priest, obtained a portable altar from the Work of Notre-Dame-du-Salut, but we are eleven priests and we cannot celebrate Mass after seven o'clock. So far I have been favored, being able to say Mass every day since our arrival; but last week, however, I had to make the sacrifice. I am in charge of a train of second-class passengers, those of the wounded who are able to sit up, and consequently work is lighter. I am with a priest and a school-master, and we get along very well together. Of our three corporals, one is a priest, another a religious. Our under-officers are excellent.

My health, thank God, is very good and with the return of the fine weather, I hope it will so continue.

Your blessing and your prayers will help to preserve it, and assist me in sanctifying myself in this new kind of life. Accept, etc.

Your humble son,

FRANCIS PEHAU.

THE COMBATANTS

January 29, 1915, Father Delanghe wrote announcing another victim of the war.

This time, he spoke of a young seminarian, a former pupil of the Berceau of Saint Vincent de Paul, John Francis Labadie, who was struck in the trench near Craonne on January 5th, and died at the relief-station. This young man, born December 2, 1894, at Ygos in Landes, belonged to an excellent family. His father is an official of acknowledged probity and prudence, while his mother is a woman of delicate sensibility and sterling christian virtue. His eldest brother was teacher at the parish school of Saint Vincent at Xaintes; two sisters and a little brother also survive him.

After his first communion, John Labadie was placed at the higher elementary school of Dax, where he remained three years. Meanwhile, his vocation manifested itself and thanks to his strong and independent character, gradually developed. Having decided to become a missionary, he obtained the consent of his parents to enter the apostolic school at the Berceau of Saint Vincent de Paul, where he was received, July 24, 1909.

He was pious, exact and industrious, but at the same time full of life and animation at games and sports. Physically he was strong and handsome, and his dignified bearing seemed an exterior manifestation of his pure and elevated soul.

Possessed of a lively imagination and sprightliness of disposition, which his severe classical studies did not sufficiently moderate, he labored energetically to overcome this defect, and so successful was he that every month his name appeared upon the roll of honor.

But a man's true worth lies in his heart and will. Now, John Labadie possessed a kind heart and an energetic will. His kindness prompted him on one occasion to watch for several nights beside a dying person, and to write the most consoling letters to the disconsolate family. His love for the poor is shown in the following incident related by his mother: One evening being alone in the house, he saw a poor man who seemed in great distress. Having nothing else to give, he took the bread which was intended for the family supper and bestowed it upon the poor man. His mother adds that this was not the only time he acted in this manner. His love of God led him daily to the Holy Table, and his reverential posture during his preparation and thanksgiving, betrayed the devout affection of his heart. He loved the Blessed Virgin with special affection as the letters to his parents written by his professors and companions, unanimously testify; and the letters

which he himself wrote from the firing-line, are filled with outpourings of devotion to the Queen of heaven, and with hope of soon beholding her. His great desire was to make God known and loved. By his words and example, he became an apostle; and so apparent was his goodness that his companions elected him Prefect of the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin. On some occasions his zeal betrayed sentimentality, or again, severity; for who is perfect in youth, or we may add, even in older years.

His vacations spent in his own parish with his family, were seasons of real apostleship. He frequented the rectory, spent much time with the pastor and his assistant, taught catechism to the little boys, assisted in the organization and development of works for youth, in fine, he was an embryo missionary.

He was regularly received into the intern Seminary, August 22, 1914, but soon after was obliged to leave for the barracks at Saintes. Abbé Clenet, chaplain of the Little Sisters of the Poor, speaks thus of him:

He was a little saint. How much good he would have done, had he lived to receive Holy Orders and to exercise the functions of the holy ministry! But God willed otherwise. Fiat! In heaven he prays for those who loved him, and his generosity in the hour of sacrifice assures to his dear companions in arms, definite success in the struggle. As to myself, I shall never forget him.

One of his comrades in the trench tells us what he was at the front.

John Labadie was my best friend. With him I shared my joys and sorrows, and he it was who, more than any one else, increased within me religious sentiments, awakened that faith and hope which now constitute the only happiness of a French soldier. Oh, how happy I was with him!

John Labadie had a presentiment of his death, as he wrote to Father Delanghe, on Christmas, a few days before his death:

I left the Seminary of Notre-Dame du Pouy without finishing my novitiate or having the happiness of making

my holy vows. God wished me to share in the defence of our country among the soldier-seminarians. This was not what I expected; but God willed otherwise, and I submit.

Now, I am more or less *in extremis*, because I assure you, the enemy does not spare us, and as in time of war everything is so uncertain, I may die any day. So in order to die as true a child of Saint Vincent as possible, I made my vows this morning before the crucifix, during the Mass said by the military chaplain of the brigade. I now renew them at your feet, Father Superior, and sign the formula of them, thus intrusting to you my soul's interest, grateful if you consider me as one of your dying children who, nevertheless, desires to live many years, in order to give himself to God in the dear Congregation.

The formula of the vows follows, signed: Joannes Labadie. *Et toto vitae tempore ero totus tuus in Christo.* Alas! Father Delanghe soon ceased to be his superior, for John Labadie soon belonged entirely to Jesus Christ in heaven.

We give extracts from four letters from his friends in the trenches, describing his last moments. The first two are from Mr. Rousseau, secretary to the colonel and a pupil of the seminary of Bordeaux, written on the afternoon of January 5.

January 5.

It is with a trembling hand that I come to apprise you of the death of good Labadie which I have just witnessed.

As they could not get a priest, they came for me. I prayed, saying the De Profundis with the prayer. An immense explosive bomb fell in his "house," the trench, wounding him probably in the heart, but inflicting wounds in every part of the body. I am trying to obtain permission to have the burial postponed until tomorrow morning that we may have a little religious service if possible.

Second letter from the same :

January 5.

Now that I am calmer, I shall endeavor, in the stillness of the night, after the day's busy bustle, to give you some details, at least as many as I can remember. Labadie's company is still in the trenches, and consequently, I have received but little information concerning the accident. Our friend died like a saint, and he now looks down on us from the height of heaven. The beauty of his soul seemed reflected on his countenance even after death. His sufferings were terrible, but no traces of them were visible on his pallid features. On Christmas Day, when some of us gathered in my room for a little recreation, he said to us nearly in these words: "As we never know what may happen, I made my vows yesterday." Thus he prepared himself for death. He did not have the priest when he was dying, but I believe he did not need one. Poor young Labadie! He passed from life to death with his usual composure. His was the first death I have ever witnessed, and it made an impression on me.

Sauvaget, with the aid of the sappers, made a coffin for our dear comrade. If after the war, his parents wish to reclaim his body, it will be easier for them to do so.

The other letters are from George Sauvaget, sapper of the 6th.

January 11.

It was about eleven o'clock on the morning of January 5th, that an immense bomb fell on the subterranean dwelling of our friend. He alone received nearly all the contents of the deadly missile, for the two comrades seated in front of him at the time were not injured, but only covered with debris. Notwithstanding his fifteen wounds, Labadie was not instantly killed. Perfectly conscious, after receiving the first dressings, he bade adieu to his

comrades, and was then taken off on his last painful journey. Wrapped in a blanket, he was carried two kilometres, through a narrow dismal tunnel (for stretchers are useless in the tunnels) to the relief-station in the school building at Paissy. You may imagine how much he suffered, as his head was the only part of the body uninjured. The little medal which he wore on his breast was broken in two. On the way, we stopped at the post of the commander, to whose interrogatories he made this beautiful reply: "Death costs me nothing, provided France be victorious." These words, as well as his death, have greatly impressed all who knew him, for he fell like a hero and a martyr. The chaplain not being on the spot, we sent for Rousseau. With much difficulty, we were able to make him a coffin, and we laid him to rest in the little cemetery near the ruins of the church, by the side of his lieutenant, Bergès, killed the same day. The chaplain came, but we were obliged to perform the ceremony hastily, for we had been bombarded, and there would be new victims.

Second letter from the same :

January 23.

The name of Labadie is so deeply engraven on the cross at the head of his grave that the place cannot be mistaken. The military chaplain, Father Berchon, a Dominican, came on the 6th at 3:30 and recited the prayers. He was very fond of our dear comrade.

We conclude these notes with the words of one of Labadie's companions at Craonne, who after reporting his death, adds: "Poor Labadie! I say poor, but he is richer than we, for I am sure, that after being our model on earth, he now enjoys the recompense he merited from God. Did he not tell us that death is not the end of all, but rather the beginning of a new life."

On January 21, a funeral service for the repose of his soul was celebrated at Notre-Dame-du-Pouy.

The House at Dax, so sorely tried by two deaths, is still anxious regarding another of her children, Brother Prueret, of whom nothing has been heard since the opening of the war. One of our dear students from the Mother House, Brother Tiberghien, was severely wounded. At his request the following letter was written to Father Payen, Director of the students.

Cluny, January 5, 1915.

VERY DEAR SIR,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

Your letter was the first I received after reaching the hospital of Verdun, and you may imagine what joy it afforded me. I have since received your second in which you express your kind wishes. I thank you most sincerely for the affection you express and for your willingness to share my sufferings.

As you know, I was wounded on December 8th. On the eve, I had received Holy Communion, and offered myself to the Blessed Virgin for anything she would ask of me, provided I persevered in my vocation. The next day I felt that the Blessed Virgin had a great surprise for me. When I was struck I was reciting the Memorare. The protection of the Blessed Virgin was here visible as my companion was instantly killed, and a few days later our regiment was ordered to resist, at any cost. There I was then, nailed to the cross in earnest, but as you know, I had from the beginning of the war accepted every trial in a spirit of reparation. I shall not conceal the fact that I have suffered and that I still suffer much, for the wound is very deep and the major had never extracted so large a fragment of shell, which I hope to have an opportunity of showing to you. In the first days particularly, I saw from their looks, the anxiety on my account, for owing to my great weakness, they wondered if I could stand the shock.

I left Verdun, December 25, and am now at Cluny. I

am better, though perfectly helpless; yet I hope soon to recover the use of my limbs. I shall soon write to the students and give them a few more details.

Kindly tell all of my condition, but particularly Most Honored Father, the Assistant, and Most Honored Father Fiat.

I must conclude by recommending myself to your good prayers and remain in Jesus and Mary Immaculate,

Your most grateful

TIBERGHIEU

per Abbé DAVID,

Temporary Hospital of Cluny.

Letters from Father Dondeyne.

January 29, 1915.

One word at least to-day, which though written in haste, will assure you that my health is excellent. The cold has been intense for the last few days; but we can bear it. Where we are now in front of the enemy, we are obliged to remain almost motionless that the sentinels may keep closer guard, and it requires all our endurance to stand the cold. May God accept all these sufferings for the success of our dear country!

I hope that the recent trial of illness by which God has permitted you to be attacked will soon pass over. Your children pray much for you and I unite myself with all my heart to them during the holy Mass and also while saying the Little Hours.

My thoughts often return to the dear Mother House. Oh, kindly pray much for us; courage is necessary, and prayer alone can sustain us in our miseries.

In the love of Jesus and Mary Immaculate, I remain,

Your devoted child,

R. DONDEYNE.

March 16, 1915.

With a tenderness truly paternal, our good God continues to protect me in this monotonous life in the trenches. Without giving you any more information concerning our situation which is forbidden, I can tell you that several of the conflicts, the accounts of which you have perhaps read, have taken place very near us. Our sector has not been attacked, but believe me, the enemy would be well received.

We shall leave behind us veritable curiosities, and when the lake cities are spoken of, our underground dwellings will not be forgotten. These are protected by a network of barbed iron wires, and lost in the midst of communicating tunnels through which the most skillful would not be able to find their way in the first attempt. The most vigilant guard is constantly maintained. In spite of fatigue and bad weather, the sentinel must do his duty.

In the meantime, shells fall, bullets are heard near us, but this is our daily bread to which we have grown accustomed. We laugh after all is over, and all the more merrily, because rarely has the enemy's fire resulted in accidents among us.

I wished to have more freedom during the day that I might secure religious services, so I was obliged to give up my officer's rank, which I did some days ago. I now have my daily Mass even during our stay in the trenches. In the cantonment, it will be easier to arrange the services. I shall see the men oftener, especially the most fervent, in order to encourage them and develop the good we have commenced. It is a grain of mustard seed, and God gives us this time for the seed to push forth.

Please obtain the grace which will render it fruitful and the courage and patience necessary for the workmen. Obtain for us all courage and confidence that we may accept the holy will of God.

Kindly continue, Most Honored Father, to remember me in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

May God bless and sustain you in the long and terrible trial through which the family of Saint Vincent is passing.

Your dutiful and grateful child,

R. DONDEYNE,

Stretcher-Bearer,

327th line, 19th Company

Postal Sector 134.

We have seen that Father Dondeyne has given up his title of sergeant to devote himself to the more priestly duties of caring for the sick ; Father Dagouassat, a native of Saint Vincent's birthplace, cannot renounce his insignia as cavalry-sergeant of the 24th regiment of artillery, which does not prevent him from being a real missionary and exercising his zeal in an intelligent and original manner. In order to combat the singing of improper songs among his soldiers, he has composed patriotic and religious songs which are sung to the air *Montagnes Pyrénées*, etc., etc. He sent us a photograph of his camp. In the middle of a plateau, all white with snow, watches *Victor le Ronflant*, as he calls his cannon. To the right, a wretched shed is, so to speak, the balcony of his villa for the Cadets of Gascony, which is but a cave dug in the rock. Two openings give access to it, and these the soldiers call the gate of Lorraine and the gate of Gascony. Father Victor Dagouassat stands proudly in the middle of the photograph ; he searches the horizon and is on guard against taubes. An adverb placed above the figure characterizes his state of soul : "Joyfully," and is in contrast with the wild solitude of the plain that is spread out endlessly.

Letters of FATHER DAGOUASSAT, C. M. to

FATHER ROBERT, Secretary General.

January 10, 1915.

MY DEAR SIR,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever !

Some little unforeseen matters have delayed all my correspondence. It is the fault of a zeppelin that threw

bombs on Nancy on the morning of December 26. It then became necessary for us to go around the city and to exhaust ourselves in manœuvres of defence.

For example, to-day, Sunday, I have been up since two o'clock this morning. I was able to slip away and say Mass in a neighboring village, at eight o'clock. From that time till now, four o'clock in the afternoon, I have had leisure only for my dinner, to read a chapter of Saint Paul and say my beads. Then my turn to keep guard comes from ten o'clock to two in the morning.

Oh! I feel that your soul is crushed, because you have all the news and know all the anguish. The great work for us who are at the front, is to put joy into the hearts of our men and make it overflow around us. You may be sure that if the priests were not here, the French soldiers would have little enjoyment, good humor, patience and courage. We hope also that the presence of the priests will help to rechristianize the country, and that their daily contact with the soldiers, even more than religious military ceremonies, will bring grace little by little into their souls. I endeavor to be a missionary in Lorraine which Saint Vincent loved so much.

Be pleased, my dear Sir, to accept the expression of the good will which I have for you. In our Lord and Mary Immaculate,

Yours devotedly,
V. DAGOUASSAT.

February 14, 1915.

Your letter came to me yesterday after being a month on the way. Delay in correspondence does not disturb me, because if I were in Madagascar, letters would not come so quickly. A happy coincidence, Father Méout's letter was handed to me at the same time as yours, although written three weeks later. Many thanks!

Perhaps before long we shall suffer a fierce assault and then I shall have little time to give news. I profit then by the free moments given me by Quinquagesima Sunday, called popularly in French, Carnival Sunday.

Have we had carnival at the front? Yes and no; it depends on what you mean by the word. Judge for yourself as I am going to give you the details of my day's work; you may then form an idea of my life here.

To-day I was resting back of the battle line; only a relative repose, because all day long we have to hold ourselves in readiness to bring down taubes or aeroplanes bent on the doleful duty of killing the children of Nancy. The weather is clear and suitable to the bold swoop; but the wind is so strong that it bespeaks quiet for us and so I have a free Sunday that must be well employed.

Be not surprised to find me still in bed — in the hay, so to speak — after six o'clock. Last evening we worked in an icy rain and in mud to construct a footbridge. Wanting to devote to-day to my correspondence, after eleven o'clock only was I able to stretch out in all my clothes.

The pastor being sick, asked me to give Holy Communion for him, which he gives ordinarily at half-past seven o'clock. In the meantime, I heard the confessions of three foot-soldiers and I had the happiness of giving them the good Lord as well as to some good souls of the village. It is a small town about ten kilometres from the frontier. It was visited by some bombs during the month of September and it would have received more if our military genius had not torn down the church spire, a splendid target for the artillery of the enemy. The village is thus laid quite bare, but the church has not suffered; I speak of the walls, because the windows, put in seven months previous, have been riddled with shot and shrapnell. The poor pastor has stopped up the holes with pieces of paste-board which let in the wind and are eyesores. . . .

A little later in the morning, a generous family lent me a chair and some ink to scribble my little address. Our soldiers love Masses where there is a sermon; a good way to induce them to go into the church is to sing loudly or speak so vehemently as to be heard on the street. Oh, it is not a mission sermon or one in the refectory, but something that lasts ten minutes, just time to tell them, that at the approach of the feast of Easter, our French soldiers like those of Jeanne d'Arc, should purify and revive their souls, that is, go to confession and receive Holy Communion. . . . That was what I wrote, read over and over again, then made a tour of the cantonment to see if there was anything new, and to reannounce the hour of the military Mass.

Going along I shook hands affectionately with some artillery-men who had made good their escape last evening, from the broadsides of two cannon that keep guard night and day near the frontier. A German shell thrown at random, fell upon one of our caissons, battered it and hurled it into the air. It was loaded with melinite shells, but only some cartridges were exploded. Cannon number 75, placed at the side of the caisson, was lifted up and thrown upside down. That was all. Only five metres away in a sheltered place, were nine artillery-men who felt only a slight shock. I might have been there, at the time of this scattering of German bombs, for it was there we had worked all day, but seeing us tired and soaked from the rain, our adjutant had ordered us to set out for the camp an hour earlier. This little incident struck us forcibly, because of a multitude of minor circumstances in which I saw the hand of God protecting us from death. My gunner simply said: "It is a miraculous stroke!" The same thing was said many times to-day by different persons. The Blessed Virgin is surely with us!

A surgeon of the marine cannoneers has made me promise

to see him to-morrow. He is a brave marine who has without doubt, traveled around the world and who never misses a military Mass. He comes there to seek peace, light, and consolation. He talks of his son missing since August, of his wife, a courageous soul, but crushed with grief; he tells me of his woes and weeps freely, whilst I try to instruct and console him. He listens to me, he who was brought up by his father and grandfather in the blackest infidelity. It embarrasses me to have a man who has seen so much, confide in a child such as I am . . . ; but I remember that since last July I am a priest of our Lord Jesus Christ, and souls feel that after God, we are their only source of happiness.

The hour for military Mass arrived, and in haste, I started towards the church where some singers accompanied by a sergeant on the harmonium, repeated the most familiar canticles, canticles of war also, in which all joined in a rude but impressive chorus. These rough voices filling the church, distracted me during the Mass begun around eleven o'clock. I hope that the divine Master was pleased with them. Everybody is not able to assist at these Masses, because war regulations do not leave us free, and the momentary absence of immediate danger calms the indifferent who are hard to be converted. The war has made them well disposed, but it has not done all the work for the future missionaries. Beautiful manifestations of faith collectively should not make us believe that there is no longer lack of faith and indifference in France.

The evening is calm, as was the morning. At two o'clock, I replaced the pastor at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament for the parish. At five o'clock another Benediction for the soldiers with hymns still stronger than those sung at Mass, and I saw before me a colonel carried away by the voices of his companions, humming under his grizzly moustache:

*Ils ne l'auront jamais
Le vieux sol béni de la France!*

or again:

Catholique et Français toujours!

These hymns although heard many times, almost every Sunday, are always impressive. Indeed in the artillery at the front, grand functions cannot be organized, as we are always on the alert. While some ask the hour for Mass, others come to say, "We are lonesome unless we go to church and sing hymns." This it is that without any advertising, causes our Masses to be so well attended, for those who come to the services come there to pray.

Among our soldiers of the Southwest, many know how to pray a little more at length than their compatriot Lahire. Here is the prayer of a reservist written in chalk on the walls of a church of Lorraine: "To you, dear Mother, I come to-day to thank you for having preserved me from the danger of death; and having full confidence in you, I am ready for all the attacks that will be commanded. Many times a day, I raise my eyes towards you, so that your blessing may protect me and my companions, and that some day we may be victorious. I am yours entirely, I receive whatever you may send me. May God's will be done! To you, my dear Mother, I confide my dear spouse and my beloved son. Grant them what they need during my absence, strength, courage, and health, and to me a return to them some day. Our Lady of Armies, preserve me from shot and shell. A soldier of 206."

Similar prayers are very numerous in certain churches; mistakes in spelling are not wanting, and sometimes ignorance of doctrine, but the two sentiments that recur constantly are confidence in the Blessed Virgin and love for family. Thus for example, after Mass a soldier asked me: "Have you not a medal for my little daughter?" And

before Benediction one evening, a brigadier, a brave little shoe merchant, said : "Now, there no fear of appearing what we wish to be, surely after the war things will be somewhat changed."

I would not have been a good father of a family, had I allowed Carnival Sunday to pass without affording a little gaiety to the sixteen men of our mess. This is why our evening meal was considerably increased by the addition of cheese and cigarettes...and a little raffle with big prizes and little prizes, woolen goods, knives, cakes of soap, etc., etc. I give these details because everything came from our sisters. How often during the last six months, have they not proved themselves sisters and mothers by helping my little efforts.

It is quite late, but I must finish this letter written in haste. Indeed until after nine o'clock, we laughed and sang together. We must sing to keep cheerful. Around me were seated fathers of families, men who now and then mourn at night over their lost ones; one of these counts already three brothers dead and another wounded and a prisoner, and yet they sang just the same. It is needless to tell you that I sing as they do and even more than they do.

In December, I notified Father Assistant that I wished to have a chapel. Will you have the kindness to tell him that a generous soul has discovered my difficulty? Now I am already to continue my work and the destruction of the churches will not prevent me from bringing down our Lord in the midst of the soldiers.

Be pleased, etc.

V. DAGOUASSAT:

March 1, 1915.

Three days ago, I received the following little note:
"Sir, I have the honor to inform you that you are assigned

the duty of presenting before the council of war the defense of a man named B..., a soldier of the 323d infantry, accused of disrespect to a superior in the service. . . ." What bad luck! and it is impossible to escape it, because of the small number of lawyers in the regiments of this division. To console myself I hastened to inquire about the case and at the same time to pay a visit to our sisters at Nancy who care for us as mothers.

While on the way, my little knowledge of the work *De Judiciis* came back to me clothed in Father Gibiard's forcible style; then there was the picture of our Blessed Father becoming the defender of the poor galley-slaves and the consolation of the prisoners. Were it not for this war, never perhaps would I have had the opportunity of following for several hours, the glorious footsteps of the Almoner General of the Galleys. At heart, I was more satisfied than annoyed, because I was to perform a duty of our holy vocation.

Graces of our state were not wanting. The accused, a poor Vendean mason, was really surprised from the visits that I made him, to see that I did not despise him and that I treated him as a brother. His emotion was still greater, when in the plea, I besought the council of war not to grieve his wife and three little children. Conclusion: they inflicted the minimum punishment, but it was severe; eighteen months in prison for lack of respect for a sergeant commanding him; whereas with us, in the seminary, the same offence would have merited at most, the penance of a *Miserere*. Obedience is easy amongst the missionaries.

Since I may be called any day for some new case, I recommend myself to your prayers. I must tell you that God spoils me: during the whole of February, I was able to say Mass and pray for our two families.

Be pleased to present to our Most Honored Father my filial devotion, and believe me, etc.

DAGOUASSAT.

Let us now listen to Brother Tautzia, a young cleric, who has just left the seminary. On March 26, 1915, he wrote the following letter to the Very Rev. E. Villette, Superior General.

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

My manifold duties and the terrible events in which I am involved, have prevented me from gratifying until to-day my desire of writing to you.

Having received the inestimable privilege of being admitted among the children of Saint Vincent, scarcely had I finished my two years' seminary at Notre-Dame-du-Pouy, when the war with Germany broke out and my class, class of 1914, was called to the colors. For nearly two months, I have been at the front but as yet have not been seriously exposed. But the hour of fierce struggles has come and consequently we expect to meet great dangers. My battalion was ordered here to reinforce a regiment nearly defeated which is at this moment one of the most exposed.

Far from lessening my courage, the present imminent peril only increases my confidence in God and Mary Immaculate. Has she not taken under her protection all the children of Saint Vincent? This thought alone fills my heart with joy and hope. And yet what are the designs of God over His unworthy servant? I daily renew my holy vows and with them make the sacrifice of my life to our Lord. Offering this life so constantly in danger, for the salvation of France and for the little Company to which I am more and more attached, should I die on the battlefield, my greatest consolation will be to appear before God as a son of Saint Vincent.

Such are the sentiments that I was anxious to impart to you, my Most Honored Father, at this time of trial, and to assure you that my only desire is to live and die as a true son of Saint Vincent de Paul, and an humble cleric of the Congregation of the Mission which I have entered of my own free choice and will.

PIERRE TAUZIA

While correcting our proofs, we learn that Brother Tauzia was killed at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, on the 21st of May.

At the extremity of the immense iron and steel wall mentioned by the German Minister, we find Brother Béthe Marcel, of the house of Ingelmunster. He belongs to the cavalry, 8th regiment of dragoons. On January 11, 1915, he wrote to the Superior General as follows :

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

I beg your pardon for offering you at so late a date my New Year's wishes, but up to the present, I have had no spare moments to do so. We are on furlough for a short time and I am taking advantage of it. Our present quarters are in a small village of Lorraine, which has been completely destroyed by bombs and fire. The church is a heap of ashes; the pastor and several of the inhabitants were shot.

I am well but the weather is miserable and the place is filled with water and mud. We take things as they come, saying gaily: "These are war times." But war is indeed a dreadful calamity, especially for one who finds himself in the midst of the strife; and oftentimes at the sight of a wounded or a dead comrade, our hearts grow faint. I am well provided spiritually. A chaplain is attached to the regiment, and I see him nearly every day. As often as my duties permit, I am able to receive Holy Communion and I expect to be more privileged, since my chaplain

wishes me for his orderly. Our chapel near the presbytery, is a very small house fitted up as well as possible, and in which officers and soldiers crowd on Sundays and festivals for Mass and Benediction.

The chaplain resides with the staff officers at the chateau in which there is a beautiful chapel, but the chateau is separated from our camp by the Meurthe whose waters are now rising and overflowing its banks. When Benediction is given in the camp, the Blessed Sacrament is carried here in a boat, as all the bridges have been taken away. Our captain formerly accompanied the chaplain with a light or rather a lantern, but now I have this honor and also that of serving Mass.

So you see, my Most Honored Father, even during war, we are deprived of nothing. It is true, the ceremonies are not as solemn as at Saint Lazare's, but our Lord, I am sure, is well pleased with all.

Kindly remember me in your prayers and when offering the Holy Sacrifice for the soldiers and for the departed.

I am, my Most Honored Father, your devoted and grateful child.

BETHE MARCEL

We shall now mention those who have not as yet left for the front or those who are about to leave, although by the time these pages appear, they will have received their baptism of fire and have become full-fledged soldiers. While awaiting news from them in the trenches, we insert with pleasure and edification the letters already received.

Brother Louis Gimalac on January 1, 1915, wrote to our Most Honored Father, offering him his New Year's greetings and stating that he was then at Valdahon "where the days are as warm and clear as in Nice." He relates that the church was crowded for Midnight Mass and it required thirty minutes to distribute Holy Communion to the soldiers—a most touching sight. He adds: "To-day, Feast of the Circumcision and the First Friday, my next bed neighbor, a member of the Society of Jesus, and I succeeded in arriving at the church in time for the last blessing of the early

Mass, after which we received Holy Communion and then assisted at the beginning of the High Mass and heard the sermon, returning to our quarters, happy at being able to give a little of the first day of the year to our Lord. We are awaiting orders to leave here.”

On the 5th of March, Brother Grimalac wrote from Lons-le-Saunier, Jura :

My comrades of Valdahon are at the front since January 24. Our Lord has shielded me from the cold and snow of February, as I passed that month in the mild climate of the Landes. Lons-le-Saunier is situated at an altitude of 350 metres and surrounded by mountains which protect it from the sharp North wind. I spent twenty days in the infirmary with fever and erysipelas, and during this time my regiment left. My turn will doubtless come very soon, and most probably by the 15th inst., I shall be in the thickest of the fray, listening to the booming of the cannon and becoming acquainted with bombs from the other side of the Rhine.

I feel confident that protected by Divine Providence and covered by the mantle of the Blessed Virgin, I shall escape all dangers, for up to the present she has so efficaciously protected my dear brothers of Notre-Dame-du-Pouy that I may indeed be trustful.

My military training has not been injurious and my health has been rather improved by this daily exercise. I feel well able to enter upon the fatigues and sufferings of a life at the front. My leave of absence was too short to permit me to spend twenty-four hours at our Mother House, but the short time allotted me was passed with Father Perrichon on a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Fourvière, the protectress of France. I have not obtained any furlough since, and for this I shall have to wait until the war is over. May peace be soon declared!

Frequently I receive news from Notre-Dame-du-Pouy, which is always welcome. Let us hope that I will soon

be able to resume my studies there and to follow the beautiful vocation of a Missionary in the school of Saint Vincent.

Your little child,

LOUIS GIMALAC

On April 1, 1915, Brother Gimalac announces that he is stationed five kilometres from the trenches:

I have reached the war zone, having left Lons-le-Saunier Saturday, March 20, with a detachment for the 47th battalion. Orders conflicted and during twelve days, we marched to and fro on the roads through Flanders. Finally, we were taken into the 109th infantry to complete their number.

Next Saturday, we shall go to the trenches and I shall receive my baptism of fire. The trenches are famous and mention is made of them in the newspapers. In some places, the German trenches are twenty-five kilometres distant and daily some of our men are killed or wounded. Confidence and courage are therefore needed just now. I place my trust in your prayers and remembrance for the soldiers when offering the Holy Sacrifice.

What a Holy Week this has been! Fortunately there was suffering to be endured which is the best way of spending the commemoration of our Lord's Passion. Yesterday morning, as we had encamped near a church, I took advantage of this opportunity — the first since we left the barracks, — to receive Holy Communion. In the village where we are now stationed, there is no church.

Begging a special blessing for your little child, I am, etc.

LOUIS GIMALAC

*Letter from BROTHER WURTZ
to the REV. A. LOUWYCK, Assistant.*

May 1, 1915

REVEREND FATHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever !

Your kind letter of April 27, has just reached me. Since my last letter, written in the early part of March, we have passed through terrible and bloody days. Our suffering in the trenches is beyond anything that can be imagined, the earth is soaked with human blood, the dead and dying are heaped together and one is powerless to give relief. We are at a school of misery that is almost inhuman, but good may come even from this, and many are the occasions presented of kneeling by dying men and of speaking to them of God whom they are so soon to see. We give the first dressing to the wounded before climbing up the ladders of the trenches to meet the enemy. This hand to hand battle is fierce, for our guns are sometimes filled with mud and cannot be used ; we are therefore obliged to seize anything we can to defend ourselves, pikes, shovels, knives become terrible weapons in this work of misery and death. On beholding these many human sacrifices, life becomes most melancholy and discouraging. Occasionally, I ask myself how is it possible that I am still living. Doubtless your prayers and those of the Brothers at Dax and Panningen furnish me with an invisible buckler. Yes, Divine Providence will grant me the favor of enjoying peace and of returning to our Mother House which I so often visit in spirit.

In our Lord, believe me your child,

LOUIS WURTZ

Alas, our dear Brother did not survive ; the details of his death will appear in our next number.

*Letter from VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General
to all his Children engaged in the War.*

Paris, April 27, 1915
Feast of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Vincent.

DEAR CONFRERES AND BROTHERS,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever !

From the time of the mobilization which snatched you away from your works or from your studies and led you to the battlefield, to the trenches, to the ambulances and to the health trains, I have never ceased to be with you in spirit. With our confrères who remain at home, I rejoice on hearing of the courage and devotedness which you show in the midst of the greatest dangers. Letters bringing me tidings of you, have been most welcome, and while I weep over the loss of one of our students of Dax and one of our Brothers, it is my fond hope that from heaven they will watch over those still engaged in the strife, and help them to support the privations and sufferings caused by the sad days through which we are passing. The glorious wounds which several among you have received on the field of honor, caused me at first much anxiety, but God, who has so visibly protected our dear Congregation, has willed to spare us new trials.

Yes, my dear Confrères and Brothers, never for a single moment have I lost sight of you. Daily as I ascend the altar, you are present to my mind and I recommend you to the Divine Master, begging that He vouchsafe to give you the needful assistance and courage to endure whatever sufferings may befall you. My heart follows you everywhere, and I shall always make it a duty to pray for you. May Saint Vincent hearken to my prayers and protect his children !

Continue therefore, my dear Confrères and Brothers, to

give to your comrades the example of undaunted courage and entire devotedness, and ever bear in mind that trials draw us closer to the Divine Master, and that sufferings are the marks of which Saint Paul speaks when he says: "I bear the marks of the Lord." Yes, bear them and bear them generously, with your eyes fixed first on our Lord to offer these sufferings to Him and to beg His help, then on the souls with whom you come in contact. Was this not the thought of Saint Vincent when he sent his priests to give missions to the soldiers?

You will in this way show yourselves his true children, and overcome by no difficulty, your efforts will be a subject of admiration to those who love and practise our holy faith. May these, by the grace of God, increase, and may the rising generation be completely transformed!

I bless you affectionately,

E. VILLETTE,
Superior General

THE PRISONERS

Letters from FATHER ZDESAR.

Cerviona, January 11, 1915.

Since the 8th inst., my six companions and I have been at Cerviona, Corsica, under the civil authority of the prefect. Have you any news for me? I have not entirely lost the hopes expressed in my last letter, but they are long being realized.

Your very obedient,
ZDESAR.

Cerviona, February 27, 1915.

What sorrow I experienced when I learned of your illness. Every day, I offer my prayers and little crosses, that your health may be perfectly restored, in the meantime I hope that God has heard the prayers of so many of Saint Vincent's children. I am quite well, except a little indisposition now and then. I employ my time in writing sermons and conferences.

As to our release nothing is known.

Your very obedient,

ZDEZAR

At the beginning of the war, our German confrère, Father Stienen, Brother Ocepek, seminarian, and the coadjutor Brother Romich, both Austrians, were confined in the College of Mont-de-Marsan. In the early part of January, they were transferred to Garaison in the Hautes-Pyrenees, to the former principal house of the Fathers of Lourdes which is now transformed into a concentration camp for the Germans and Austrians. Father Delanghe visited them in order if possible to improve their situation. Our three prisoners occupy a large room by themselves, near two of the old retired Fathers with whom they take their meals and perform their exercises of piety. This house at Garaison, formerly a house of prayer and recollection, is now a large hotel wherein men, women and children of every class and religion, Jews, Calvinists, Lutherans, Catholics, are to be found.

The following letters from Father Stienen will give us a little idea of the life he leads.

*Letter of REV. G. STIENEN, C. M., to the
VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General.*

Notre-Dame-de-Garaison, January 16, 1915.

SIR AND MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

Doubtless you have learned of our sudden departure from Mont-de-Marsan, and are likewise informed of our

present situation in the camp at Garaison. So it is not of our picturesque Bohemian, yet much to be regretted, life that I shall write, *Hæc olim meminisse juvabit!*

My letter bears the humble offering of my good wishes for the New Year. These are a little late, for in punishment of some clandestine correspondence, the letter-box could not be used for ten days. I sincerely regret that with my good wishes, I must express my sorrow at your recent illness. May it please God to grant you a speedy and complete recovery, and to preserve you to the devoted double family of Saint Vincent.

Your most humble son in the camp at Garaison,
G. STIENEN.

March 14, 1915.

Here in the camp of Garaison, our days so closely resemble one another in their monotony, that there would be danger of becoming melancholy, if each of us did not succeed in throwing into them some little variety. To put myself in the spirit of Laetare Sunday, I am writing you these lines. To be sure, I have nothing to tell you, except that your children manage to keep body and soul together, constantly hoping that the end of our captivity will soon dawn, and striving to resign ourselves to our condition. I am astonished at my fund of contentment, patience and other similar traits, much appreciated in such an emergency. We cannot become philosophers in a single day; so I am beginning to realize that my whole life, and not only my sojourn in Sicily, has so well prepared me, that I am able to support my present trial.

My hardest work is to keep busy. I am again learning "Anthology," am working at Hebrew, but I need a little vocabulary, I am "director" of the "school" for the boys, "chaplain" for the colony, etc., etc. All that to kill time and for want of something better.

You may judge, Most Honored Father, if I think of my books! What becomes of my studies? Alas, I am on the road to stupidity. What shall I do when I leave here? However if my captivity lasts much longer, I shall have to settle down to some special work.

Society at Garaison is not very interesting. Intellectually it is zero, morally it is not high, in no way is it agreeable. My relations with those around me, are rather superficial, but sufficient to make these people feel that a "priest" is something more than a simpleton or a clown. So they respect me and I command their respect.

In spite of all this, I would be better pleased, as you will readily understand, Most Honored Father, to return to the fold and to my ordinary occupations. But when...? The Assistant at Dax wrote me that it will not be long, and he told me particularly to keep you informed of my situation. Have you heard nothing from Geneva concerning me? I am living in hopes that it will come.

What is going on in the Company, what has become of our confrères and of our works in the midst of so much destruction? We know nothing of all these things and yet they are more interesting to me than all the war news. God has us in a rigid school, but we here learn many things valuable in life.

Please to accept, my Most Honored Father, my profound respect and filial gratitude.

Your very humble servant,

G. STIENEN,

Confined at Garaison.

In the preceding letter, mention is made of intervention from Geneva, which was brought about in the following way. A person connected with some influential members of the Red Cross, with some politicians and with several professors of the University, offered to interest himself in the release of Father Stienen. We believe that these measures did not succeed.

On March 23, 1915, Father Stienen wrote that still stronger intervention is about to be used. His letter follows and we trust that the efforts will be successful.

Since my last letter, about a week ago, a new and unexpected event causes me to write again. The Rev. Superior of the convent of Garaison has been directly and officially interrogated concerning me, by the Bishop of Tarbes. This information from ecclesiastical authority, was asked by a person of high rank in Rome.

From what I know the Vatican would be disposed to take proceedings with the French government for my release. I think you know my situation well enough to give the information desired, for I do not doubt that the Bishop of Tarbes will address himself to you, since in Paris, thanks to your position, you are much better able to give a sure and prompt turn to the proceedings. This can truly be none too soon. I am touched at their solicitude for me. I was asked if I am well, how I am treated, if I am allowed books, etc., etc., and the Bishop was requested to do everything possible to alleviate this undeserved imprisonment.

I beg you, Most Honored Father, to accept my filial gratitude and profound respect, and I remain in our Lord,
Your very humble son,

G. STIENEN,
Confined at Garaison

Towards the end of the same month, March, coadjutor Brother Sebastian Turnseck of the Berceau of St. Vincent de Paul, received an order from the Prefect of Landes to repair to Mont-de-Marsan. He was accompanied by a police officer in citizen's clothes. Later, Brother Turnseck was sent to Notre-Dame-de-Garaison, where the three formerly spoken of, are detained.

We shall conclude this account of our prisoners by a remark which was made to us, April 19, 1915: "I regret to inform you, that our Minister of Foreign affairs, on account of the manner in

which the Germans have behaved towards some priests in Belgium and in the North of France, believes it is not prudent to favor the priests of the nations at war with us."

THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY AND THE WAR

Letter of SISTER MAYEUR *to*
MOST HONORED FATHER VILLETTE, *Superior General.*

Estaires, February 26, 1915

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

Yesterday, we learned with pleasure through Father Heudre that you are well. May God be blessed! How grieved we were when the news of your recent illness reached us and how fervently we prayed for your recovery.

What shall I say about ourselves? Alas, for more than four months we have had the Germans around us. We are constantly enjoying the music of cannon and musketry, and we have become accustomed to this sort of concert. What ruins all around! Churches demolished, villages razed, so many persons injured, etc., etc. It is heartrending, and after all this there will be poverty and famine. Typhoid fever caused from the unburied corpses left in the trenches at the approach of the enemy, has already appeared.

This week doubtless, you have received a visit from Father Crinquette, vicar of Doulieu, and nephew of Father Delpierre, pastor of this parish. He went to Paris to secure means for rebuilding his church which was burned by the Germans. It is miraculous that Estaires was spared.

Father Heudre in his letter yesterday, asked if a visit from him would be either useful or agreeable to us, and I

hastened to answer in the affirmative. The majority of us have not yet made our retreat, nor have we seen a Missionary for a year which seems a long time. A few days ago, the sisters said to me: "We shall have no one this year for the Renovation," but they will be agreeably disappointed. I believe you were aware of our needs, and we thank you for your remembrance of us.

Thank God, I am well; happily "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." At times we know not what to do nor what to say: we are a little anxious, but never lose confidence, nor recoil before dangers. We expect bombs and we hear much about them, from time to time we even receive some, just now as I am writing I hear them roaring. We recommend ourselves to your prayers. It is said that you have visited our sisters' houses in Paris and the suburbs, when may we expect you? We are jealous. I beg God with all my heart, to preserve your health.

I have the honor to be, etc.

SISTER MAYEUR.

A sister having been sent to relieve the sisters at Estaires, Sister Mayeur thanks our Most Honored Father, and adds the following details:

Shells fall constantly. This morning an aeroplane dropped two bombs, one on the gas-works, killing two persons and wounding a third; the other on the Fénart-Vanhove factory near the bridge and our house, killing one person and wounding ten others. We were without gas for some time. The destruction is considerable.

As long as the English army remains here the suffering will not be so great, the poor will be cared for; but after it leaves, conditions will be truly sad, nothing but ruins and misery.

What life and bustle in poor little Estaires usually so quiet. There are four ambulances in the city: one in the former boarding-school of the Holy Union near the hos-

pital; a second in front of the hospital, a third in the college, and a fourth in the free school and patronage for boys. The wounded are also placed in the church de la Gorgue. Imagine how the pastor must feel. We hope they will not be placed in the church at Estaires, for there are many other available places, our house for example. We would overcrowd ourselves to save Father Catteau this pain.

I have the honor to be, etc.

SISTER MAYEUR.

Letter from SISTER JACQUEMIN *to*
MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE

Vermelles, January 12, 1915.

MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

Your affectionate letter of the 5th inst. reached me yesterday. How kind of you, to take such a maternal interest in the sufferings of your poor daughters, and what consolation for us in the midst of our sorrows to know that the Mother House of our religious family thinks of us and prays for us.

While I am writing we are witnessing the nearest and most terrible cannonade we have yet heard. The French and English are attacking La Bassée and its suburbs. Since morning (it is now five in the afternoon) houses have been shaking and nothing but fire and smoke is seen around us. The shells whizz over our roofs and we ask ourselves what is going to happen. With all this the weather seems to join in. A magnificent rainbow encircles us, it seems to stretch from the town of Cambrin which we perceive in the distance, even to our city; now come the rain and wind the noise of which mingles with the terrible roaring of the cannon. I believe our soldiers are doing good

work, because we see very little black smoke, but much white smoke rising from globes of fire which fall on all parts of the country from Vermelles even to La Bassée. Happily we are accustomed to these assaults which do not take place daily, otherwise we could not live here just now. After all there is not much choice, every place has its turn sooner or later. We would not leave our house unless forced out of it, for we would suffer as much elsewhere knowing that the house is being plundered and our poor driven out.

Our city, as well as the three others forming our parish, is situated directly between the French camp and the enemy. The shells fired on us by the Germans are doing little damage, but those sent by our army are making frightful ravages. To be convinced of this, it is only necessary to take a look at Vermelles destroyed by French cannon. This privilege was granted me last Sunday when with our sisters I visited these ruins. I could never have believed such a sight could be presented. The country can hardly be recognized. The majority of the houses have collapsed and through the openings may be seen shreds of bedding, ends of mattresses and remnants of furniture. Other buildings have either fallen to pieces, or their charred walls alone are standing. What became of the old people, the women, and particularly the children who remained in the village, no one seems to know. Several corpses of women and children in a state beyond recognition, were found, but the majority are missing. We also saw the chapel which a good Dominican father, a corporal infirmarian, has arranged with what he could find in the ruins of the church. These he has tastefully collected in a large hall, the only building saved from the disaster. The walls are draped with banners and oriflammes, and the statues of Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Peter, Saint Anthony of Padua, and Saint Francis of Assissi, are placed

around the altar. The hours for the Sunday services are appointed and all, privates and officers, assist thereat. Father Audouard, the Dominican, is most zealous, and does much good among the soldiers by his instructions. A great number are frequent communicants, and it is edifying to see them going to confession like seminarians. Some of the young soldiers zealously instruct their comrades, and then give an account of their efforts and results to the priest.

I have the honor to be, etc.

SISTER JACQUEMIN

*Letter of SISTER N. . . . Daughter of Charity, to the
MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE.*

Bully-les-Mines, February 12, 1915.

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

Profiting by the opportunity which an auto going to Paris affords me, I am happy to assure you of our safety. Our anxiety has been intense during the last fifteen days, as we feared being obliged to leave the city or at least to seek shelter in the cellar. Last Thursday, about nine in the morning, a tremendous crackling noise terrified us, it was occasioned by the dropping of two bombs nos. 420 and 210; by one of these a house about 50 metres from us was completely overthrown, and a young girl fifteen years old killed. The second fell in a ditch killing a workman and several horses, one of these being thrown two and a half metres in the air. During the day thirty bombs of the same kind fell on our city. The Germans aimed at destroying the industries. They want to stop all work, and are doing this by demolishing all the mining machinery. That day they gave us an idea of what bombardment

means, but no matter what happens, we will remain at our post and leave only by order from military authority, or in case of invasion.

To form an idea of the extreme misery existing, it is only necessary to visit the houses of the working classes where often several families are huddled together, as many as twenty or twenty-five persons, all sleeping on straw, without furniture and having no clothing except what they are wearing. Provisions are scarce and very high, as they are all needed for the army, and the enemy prevent supplies from coming in. The mining Corporation multiplies its charity, but in spite of all, there is much misery.

Only yesterday, I wept over a poor homeless woman who had hidden her poverty from us until sickness forced her to make it known. Notwithstanding all our care, she died, leaving three children, the oldest aged sixteen, has pulmonary congestion and is vomiting blood, the second is thirteen and the youngest two and a half years old. The burial took place as early as the firing of cannon and musketry permitted. The neighbors were affraid to attend, but one of the sisters, leading the thirteen-year-old boy by the hand, followed the coffin. In the cemetery only the curé the grave-digger and the sister were present. These are never-to-be-forgotten days.

In the ambulance, we have many sick, but prudently we are dismissing a great number, in order to be able to empty the hospital quickly in case of a bombardment. All our soldiers are admirable in their faith and resignation, and apparently all wear the medal; many when leaving wish another as a "souvenir." To judge of their moral and physical sufferings it is necessary to be near the fire as we are here. I believe God will accept all these sacrifices and will pardon our dear France.

*Letter from SISTER BERRET, Daughter of Charity, to the
MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE.*

Sains-en-Gohelle, February 14, 1915.

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

How much misery we have relieved since the opening of the war! During the first two months, the people here deprived of a doctor, had recourse to our assistance. Then in proportion as the country was invaded, the poor driven from their homes, took refuge around us, and to thousands we distributed soup and help of all kinds.

October 29, an ambulance was opened in our dwelling, and from that time, we have had the happiness of devoting ourselves to our dear soldiers who come directly from the front. They are wounded at Notre-Dame-de Lorette, a hill situated four kilometres from here. The German bombs fall every day at 100 or 200 metres from our house; three times they have fallen on the city. Several houses near ours have been destroyed. When the artillery duel begins, we go to the attic to inform ourselves of the danger. As the German firing never changes, we know from the first bomb what to expect, and according to direction, either take refuge in the cellar or continue our occupations to the sound of cannon and the firing of musketry, always strengthened by the thought that God is with us. From our windows we can distinctly see the battlefield. It seems that the enemy is determined to conquer our city.

The director of the health service when visiting our dear wounded, congratulated us and thanked us for our work in the ambulance. He wishes to give an official testimony of his satisfaction, and for this purpose, asked our doctors to make out a report for him. The head doctor

has kindly given me a copy of the report which I enclose as it will explain better than I can, what we are doing.

In our work we have had many spiritual consolations. All of the wounded remaining more than twenty-four hours, receive the sacrament of penance; many go to Holy Communion and several have been converted by means of our dear medal. I must tell you, Most Honored Mother, that my four companions give proof of a devotedness and spirit of sacrifice above all praise. They are the edification of the entire ambulance.

Please to accept my thanks for your maternal interest in our little family of Sains.

I have the honor to be, etc.

SISTER BERRET

Report of Major VENNIN, Chief Surgeon of Ambulance No. 3, concerning the assistance rendered to the service, by the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, Sains-en-Gohelle, Ditch 10, of the Company of Béthune.

Sains-en-Gohelle, February 10, 1915.

October 29, 1914, the ambulance for Ditch 10 of the Company of Béthune was opened in a group of academic buildings, and the Superioress of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul offered the services of her sisters. From that time, the distribution of food and drink, the washing of bedclothes and clothing, was permanently secured by the sisters in charge, and continued with perfect regularity, even at times when work was most pressing, as from December 17 to 23, when 797 wounded were received.

The results of this experiment have been excellent from every point of view. Financially, the government money was most economically handled, since for 3883 days of treatment given to 1453 wounded, to whom were added

547 transients, there was a total expenditure of only 904 $\frac{3}{4}$ francs for food and washing, or less than one-fourth of a franc per day.

The delicate care and attention bestowed upon our wounded has been highly appreciated by them. All other employments are abandoned, and the sisters devote themselves entirely to the sick, so the doctors being thus ably assisted, can give their time to operations, dressing of wounds, and retaining their patients sufficiently long to obtain a permanent cure, as the results have proved.

Transient wounded, remaining but one day	547
Wounded treated longer than 24 hours at the ambulance. . .	1456
Average length of time in the ambulance	3 days
Operations performed	180

From these and former figures it will be seen that, thanks to the judicious management of the sisters, the record of the ambulance has been raised and by proper dismissal of patients, overcrowding has been avoided and the works of the ambulance are performed with the regularity and permanence of an auxiliary hospital, which by its proximity to the firing line is particularly beneficial to the wounded whose precious lives are often saved by speedy treatment and operations.

Consequently, I consider it a duty of justice to call attention to these facts and to solicit for the Superioress of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, of Sains-en-Gohelle, Ditch 10 of the Company of Béthune, official testimony of satisfaction in recognition of the zeal with which this good work was undertaken, and for the constant devotedness which has enabled us to continue it, despite the thrice renewed menace of German bombs.

Signed: VENNIN.

Sister Léglise in a letter to Most Honored Mother Maurice, gives some details of the bombardment of Albert.

Albert, Somme, Hospital-Hospice, February 12, 1915.

MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

With all the affection of my heart, I thank you for the maternal interest you have testified for your poor daughters of Albert. Then too, I do not wish to delay giving you news, that you may not be anxious about us. Up to the present God has visibly protected us, and we trust that He will continue to do the same.

The bombardment of the unfortunate city of Albert still continues, but rather irregularly. We enjoy peace sometimes for three or four days, and even longer; then at a moment when we least expect it, the shower of shells recommences. The city grows more and more desolate; the superb basilica, formerly its ornament, is entirely destroyed, except the steeple which is still standing, but in what condition! The presbytery is completely demolished. On January 14, one hundred twenty-five shells were fired on the basilica, out of which number, at least one hundred fifteen took effect; the next day the firing continued, and the dome above the golden statue of the Blessed Virgin was dashed into splinters. It is a terrifying and heart-rending spectacle to see this once beautiful church now but a heap of ruins, and the entire centre of the city is in the same condition! One might think an earthquake had occurred.

We have with us some of our old people who were the most needy, and whom, on that account, we have been obliged to take back. Between times we receive the sick; then too, there are always wounds to be dressed. We have removed all that was possible from the basilica, and presbytery etc., etc... In a word, we try to render whatever

service we are able, and I assure you, Most Honored Mother, that we do not lack work.

Your very humble and obedient daughter,

SISTER LEGLISE.

At the end of the preceding letter, Sister Léglise said: "I do not for an instant, regret having returned to Albert; our presence here is more than useful. We are therefore quite determined to remain to the end, at least until God ordains otherwise."

We shall now see that God did ordain otherwise. This is what we read in the official communication of March 22, 1915, on the subject of airships: "The Germans have bombarded the civil hospital of Albert; the firing being executed after the places had been marked out by the airships. Several projectiles took effect; five old men were killed, many others were wounded and the Superiorress was struck."

The Community immediately sent Sister Clamorgan, Visitatrix, to secure some information concerning Sister Léglise.

Sister Clamorgan sent the following account to our Most Honored Mother Maurice:

March 26, 1915.

MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

God has just given a proof of the visible protection with which He guards the Daughters of Charity, by preserving from death Sister Léglise of Albert. Some weeks ago, after securing a place for her personnel, they quitted the hospice, but she returned with some children notwithstanding the bombardment, as she wished to shelter the abandoned old people and to save their souls.

On Passion Sunday, March 21, our Sisters had the happiness of seeing many soldiers approach the Holy Table for their Easter duty. All seemed calm, the orphans were amusing themselves, when Sister Madeleine told them to come with her to the court-yard; she had scarcely left the apartment, when a bomb broke through the roof. A

poor patient, terrified by the noise, called Sister Léglise, who ran with her usual solicitude, leaving the curé and her companions in the linen-room. Two beds from an adjoining ward were thrown with such violence on the poor sister that she might have been crushed; the accident gave the sick woman sufficient strength to raise the beds a little and disengage the sister; five old men were horribly mutilated; their limbs and arms separated from their trunks, and the bleeding head of one fell on Sister Léglise; seeing the blood flowing in torrents a woman cried out: "She is dead!" The curé and sisters, then the soldiers, quickly arrived. Sister Léglise had lost her cornette, and her habit was in shreds. An apron was thrown over her head, and filling a wheelbarrow with straw, the soldiers carried her out of the hospice, on this improvised litter. In the meantime, Sister Madeleine with a shovel was gathering up the remains of the dead bodies. The German aeroplanes pursued the sisters who in order to avoid the bombs of the enemy were obliged to lie down in a potato field.

However, it was necessary to reach Héault, the first relief station, and as soon as possible the journey was resumed. At Héault, the doctor discovered a wound in the foot and a broken rib. Not having a spare bed he offered sister his own, which she refused. The Dean of Albert insisted that the sisters be taken to Dernancourt where a friend, his confrère, would give them hospitality. The only available auto transported our dear wounded sister to that little village; and the good curé, having found a lodging for himself with one of his parishioners, offered his room, which was accepted. The other three sisters, anxious and fatigued, as can well be imagined, were content with chairs for the night.

The sad news spread rapidly. The magistrate, the sub-magistrate, the mayor of Albert, General X..., his staff, the colonel, etc.,... several curés from the environs, the

military chaplains, all came to offer their sympathy to Sister Léglise, who won the respect of her visitors by her simplicity, humility, courage, and gratitude.

But, Most Honored Mother, you may well believe that your maternal solicitude in sending us to visit her, touched our dear sister more than all else. What reciprocal joys! With what childlike docility she agreed to come to the house of Sister Mauny, so that she might recover more rapidly and resume her charitable functions as nurse.

The Dean of Albert accompanied us to the offices of the civil and military authorities. On the way, all the soldiers respectfully saluted us; on many of their caps we noticed the medal of the Sacred Heart, which they say protects them.

Naturally we followed the advice of the curé in all our undertakings. He merits this, for he has carried his delicate kindness so far as to arrange that, on March 25, a soldier-priest celebrated Mass in our dear patient's room so that Sister Léglise was able to pronounce her holy vows at the Elevation, in union with all the Sisters of Charity who are so happy to renew on that day their alliance with their divine Spouse.

The Dean is like a father who mourns over his children, and we know that he will watch over our sisters and advise them with as much wisdom as prudence. We were much affected by the following reflection: "I know," said he, "you depend entirely on your Superiors in Paris, and, therefore, I do not presume to impose my personal opinions; I only propose what appears to me just and expedient, so that we may respond to the confidence with which the Staff relies on your sisters for the ambulance, so poorly provided with nurses."

The mayor of Albert and of Dernancourt, who is also sub-prefect, had procured a convenient house for our sisters; dormitory with beds installed, a furnished refectory,

and provisions sent by the Staff. Under these conditions it seemed impossible to refuse the service of the sisters for the ambulance, and with the consent of Sister Pache and Sister Légglise, we determined that a companion in quality of nurse should accompany our dear wounded patient to the home of Cozette.

Sister Légglise took leave of the devoted ecclesiastics who had been lavish in their kind attentions.

Now, Most Honored Mother, kindly permit me to give you a short account of our trip back and forth, I know that the minutest details concerning your daughters interest you; besides, you will find therein, new motives for thanking divine Providence so paternally manifested in our regard. On the reception of your despatch, requesting us to go to Albert, Sister Pache went to the mayoralty to ask for the permit which was promptly given. A miserable conveyance found with difficulty, conducted us to the headquarters of the second division at X..., where we were obliged to ask for a military automobile, the only means of reaching Albert, and which is not given to every one.

The lieutenant, captain, and attendant, received us with that respectful sympathy which immediately puts one at ease, and after kindly listening to our request which was made with a little timidity, they responded: "Your Community has rendered sufficient services to the army to justify this testimony of its gratitude; we shall procure for you the largest auto. It will be at your disposal at the time and place you indicate, and you can thus bring back your wounded sister." Scarcely had we set out towards Amiens, than the commander sent a cyclist to inform us that Sister Légglise was at Dernancourt.

The following day after assisting at Holy Mass, Sister Pache and I set out, happy to devote ourselves for the Community; ten times were our permits demanded, and

when approaching Albert, we were fifteen times asked the password. The muddy roads were obstructed by soldiers on foot and on horseback, and by ammunition and provision wagons.

At last we reached Dernancourt, and two sisters, who just at that moment, were crossing the street, conducted us to the presbytery where we found Sister Légglise. After adoring our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and thanking Him for His blessings, we started for Fouilloy, and in passing, stopped at the mayor's office to inform him of our proceedings. Our sisters were delighted to see us as they had not expected us and after giving them news of Sister Légglise, we brought Sister Antoinette back with us to Dernancourt where after thanking the general, we left the presbytery. As Sister Légglise expressed a desire to see the administrator who had proved himself so devoted, we passed by Albert. What a sight! The gilded statue of the Blessed Virgin that formerly overlooked the valley of the Somme, still stands in the belfry, but is bent towards the earth, like an afflicted mother who shares the sorrows of her children and is unwilling to abandon them.

At last the automobile stops before the house of Cozette, where Sister Mauny and her companions awaited Sister Légglise, to care for her and to cure her.

What a happiness it was for her companions of Albert, after three months labor in the ambulance of Amiens, to find again their good Sister Servant.

But we were obliged to leave in order to catch the only available train for Paris. We promised to remember them at the feet of the all-powerful Virgin and to present to our venerated Superiors their expressions of gratitude.

Truly the cornette is everywhere venerated, from the general, so anxious to contribute all in his power towards our dear sister's recovery, even to the youngest soldiers without any instruction or even without education, but

who all bear within them the Christian heart of true Frenchmen.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

SISTER CLAMORGAN.

*Letter of SISTER SAINT-PEREUSE, Daughter of
Charity, to MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE.*

Rheims, February 10, 1915.

Our auxiliary hospital is the refuge of many sorrows, since it receives those who are most severely wounded and who come directly from the front.

Conditions are just the same at Rheims, with the exception of some violent attacks on certain points in the suburbs; we perceive the bloody consequences, for the sad coaches succeed one another filled with stretchers covered with blood and dust.

One evening, out of seven wounded received at the same time, three died of their horrible wounds. One of them had received the entire fuse from a 150 in his shoulder blade. The fuse when empty weighed 750 grams. Being carried to the general as a sad curiosity, it was carefully examined by the engineers, and viewed by all the officers. It is truly a most wonderful contrivance.

The poor child survived six days, and we had almost hoped to save him, owing to his wonderful energy. His general had ordered him placed on the list for promotion. In falling, this young man said to his officer: "Captain, it is better that I should go than you ... You are more useful than I am." His neighbor received serious abdominal injuries from the same projectile. The nut of the copper fuse screw, weighing 70 grams, was extracted. These two young men had received the entire contents of the projectile. The latter, twenty-five years of age, and the sole support of his family, lived only a few hours.

At midnight, a poor young fellow, the father of a family, was brought in; his cartridge box had exploded when struck by a ball. He lived only forty-eight hours. Two others, twenty-four and twenty-five years of age, respectively, had their limbs amputated. The leg of one was left on the field; and the doctors deliberated about immediately removing his second limb, which was held on only by the bone. He had lost so much blood that they considered that the least operation would only prove fatal, so decided to wait a little while. Then there was a poor Breton whose right eye had to be removed, the left one also being involved. Another young soldier's neck was pierced from side to side by a ball, etc. What sad and horrible sights!

If, however, these spectacles are sad as regards the bodies, how magnificent for souls! The state of suffering and privation develops admirable virtues in the hearts of our soldiers.

When we see these men so patient, so courageous, so forgetful of self, facing death without murmur or complaint, at a sign from their commanders, we are astonished! This is carrying courage even to heroism.

Among the wounded, one was brought to us who had lost both hands by the explosion of a shell. The general came to see him, decorated him with a military medal and read to him a report signed by General Joffre. This young soldier, with his bleeding wrists, had scraped away the earth to extricate his sergeant who was buried under a heap of rubbish. When they wished to bind up his wounds, he said: "Think first of those who are underneath!" and then dragged himself to the relief station. Yet he saw nothing extraordinary in his conduct and thought he had done only his duty.

We have under our care an artillery lieutenant who was seriously injured. His skull and radius are fractured; he

has lost one eye, and has many other wounds. Some days after, a general of his division coming to decorate a soldier, said quite rudely to the lieutenant: "You were lucky enough; you will pull through; but your comrades have been killed because you did not carry out my orders to leave a specified place. What do you think about it?" The lieutenant made no reply; that evening his fever increased, and the next day he asked to receive Holy Communion. After his thanksgiving, he remarked to Sister Watrelot: "This morning I offered my Communion for the general." We learned later from his captain that the order had never been received.

One evening two young cavaliers from the seventh hussars, aged twenty and twenty-one years, were brought in, both seriously wounded. One of them died the next day without regaining consciousness, having been struck in the forehead. He was a young student from Paris. The other is slowly recovering from his severe wounds. . . Sent as scouts they were creeping close to the ground to listen, and according to custom, did not answer the sentinel's "Who goes there?" Seeing the two shadows, a hundred-fifty metres distant, the sentinel fired. The hussar who recovered said simply: "We did our duty and the sentinel did his!" The latter was informed too late of the mission of these two poor soldiers.

How many similar instances we could give you, Most Honored Mother; but these will suffice to show the bravery of our soldiers.

We have received some enlisted volunteers; one of these, fifty years of age, quickly recovered from a wound in the region of the heart, and joyfully returned to the firing line. He is the father of several children, one of whom, eighteen years old, a foot-soldier, died with us. A young freshman before returning to college, came

to visit the ambulance. The operating room seemed to interest him greatly. As he examined with curiosity the surgical instruments, I expressed the hope that they would never be used on him. "Ah, Sister!" said he, "an arm or a leg, more or less, counts little when compared with our country!"

Another trait: One day two of our former patients came in to see us. They were accompanied by a little soldier fifteen years of age; he is the child of the regiment. Having no relatives, and being driven from the invaded country, he wandered here and there until the colonel adopted him and had a uniform made for him. This fits him perfectly, although he is very small. He lives in the camp as happy as a king, renders many little services and succeeds very well on drill. In the evening, when about to set out, our two ex-wounded soldiers had forgotten the pass word; then the little one straightened himself up proudly, and said: "I know it, and I will get you through." We filled his pockets with chocolate and gingerbread.

February 12 — From ten o'clock in the evening a dreadful discharge of musketry was followed by that of cannon, which continued throughout a superb night all resplendent with stars. Our soldiers returned the fire, and for two hours and a half there was a desperate combat. Never before had we heard its equal; the sky seemed all on fire, as with incessant lightning. All our gendarmes were ready to mount their horses; in the ambulances everything was ready. The tumult lessened little by little, the cannon alone continuing during the night.

All terminated in a great deal of noise and little bloodshed, at least on our side; but we passed through hours of intense anxiety.

We have just lost one of our patients whose two legs were amputated; he was twenty-three years of age, and

died in admirable sentiments of faith. He was the main support of his family and had four younger brothers. Less than two hours before his death, he answered the evening prayers. He repeatedly murmured, "The good God is everywhere. . . He sees all. . ." We are distressed at his death.

We have had some unexpected cures, one being an artillery man, aged twenty, whose head and hands were so frightfully burned that he was an object of horror. During the painful dressing of his wounds, he said, or rather cried out continually: "Ah, my God, my God! Good holy Virgin, good holy Virgin!"

February 13 — Our city presents a lamentable sight. This is the one-hundred-first day of the bombardment. We are, however, miraculously preserved. Sister says that it is assuredly the Blessed Virgin who is protecting us; but she adds that our protection seems also as a recompense to Madame Roederer, the foundress of this house, who silently performed so many good works. The little church of Saint Genevieve that she so loved, and which is only the country parish church, has become the center of piety for the Catholics of Rheims during these calamitous times.

By a sweet privilege, the Cardinal decided that every Friday of the month there should be perpetual adoration here, in reparation for that which cannot be made in many parishes of his diocese now in the hands of the enemy.

Sister is at all times the support of the house, and the light that illuminates it. She is surprisingly well at present. Always up at four o'clock, she is the first in the chapel. May God preserve her to us for a long time to come!

February 14 — The return of Sister Assistant being fully decided for to-morrow, I think Most Honored Mother, that I shall confide this lengthy letter to her

care. She is very happy that she will soon see you, and be able to offer to you the filial love of all your daughters in Rheims. You will receive, from Sister Devilder, many details that I have forgotten or that cannot be written.

SISTER SAINT-PEREUSE.

Letter from SISTER DEVILDER to the
MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE

Rheims, Auxiliary Hospital 17,
February 20, 1915

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

On my return from Paris, I found our house still standing and Sister Desgarets as valiant and courageous as ever.

When I entered Rheims, the centre of the city was being literally showered with bombs. There were from twelve to fifteen victims that day and among them a woman whose head was severed from her body, and a soldier mortally wounded in the chest. He was brought here only to die a few hours later.

Yesterday there was another terrible bombardment and there were at least twenty victims. The cathedral was struck by a bomb and a suite of rooms in the Cardinal's residence close by, was completely ruined. From this you may see, my Most Honored Mother, that the Blessed Virgin continues to protect us, for the enemy's bombs pass to the left of our house in bombarding the camp a few kilometres farther back.

During my absence, two of our soldiers died, the one whom I had mentioned to you before as having been struck by an explosive ball and who on his arrival during the night was immediately operated on. It was the most terrible operation Sister Péreuse had ever witnessed, and lasted two hours. But good news also greeted my return, as I learned

that our "free-thinker" enlightened by reading the work, *L'Immortalité chrétienne*, and by several talks with one of the priests of our parish, would be baptized next day. Yesterday at one o'clock the impressive ceremony, so sublime in its simplicity, took place. Our neophyte looked very happy and he pronounced his profession of faith in a tone that spoke conviction. Our major, a true Christian, was present as also Sister Desgarets and two other sisters. This morning our little oratory was the scene of his solemn First Communion, at which the whole Community assisted. The priest whose words had enlightened his soul, celebrated the Mass; he was served by our major and a young lieutenant who arrived here last night for a slight operation. This latter is President of the *Catholic Youth* in the Ardennes and a staunch Catholic. Our children sang several hymns and I thought how happy you would have been, my Most Honored Mother, to be present at this touching ceremony which gave another soul to God to know and serve Him. We all feel confident of this young man's perseverance as he is very intelligent and has taken this first step through sincere conviction.

Our work continues the same. Yesterday evening we received seven wounded, six of whom are mortally injured. One died during the journey. When I raised the covering, and beheld the disfigured face covered with clotted blood, mud and dust, and that one eye was gone, I was terror stricken. He was a Breton, married and the father of one child. His wounded brother, brought in at the same time, said to me: "My brother was wounded with me, is his condition serious?" I answered "Yes," not daring to say that he was dead. Operations were performed until half-past eleven. Four of the soldiers had been wounded in a trench by the bursting of a bomb, and were buried under heavy beams; two others on a farm where they had taken refuge, and the last one through the

ridge of the trench had received a ball which entered his ear and came out near the eye without injuring it. His wound however is very serious and his life is in danger. The dressing of these serious wounds is very long, as these have to be thoroughly cleansed, being usually filled with splinters, dust or strips of clothing. Our majors are very conscientious and use every possible means to cure our poor soldiers.

A poor man from Saint-Malo, just came in to seek his son whom he had heard was mortally wounded; we were obliged to tell him that this poor child was dead. This boy was one of those wounded while on guard, and of whom I spoke to you, Most Honored Mother. He lost his left leg and the right one was amputated three days later. This brave child passed his last night reciting prayers and he often repeated: "God is everywhere." The father's grief was heartrending, for it was his eldest son, the support of the younger children, and his mother's comfort. How many like sorrows we witness, Most Honored Mother!

One of our Sisters has just returned from the burial of a soldier and tells us there were over two hundred soldiers present. In the cemetery the captain spoke so touchingly that all wept. His last words were: "Far away is, I know, a wife and children who will shed bitter tears, but on looking towards heaven will say: 'There we will meet again.' — Yes, my friends, for God, for France! . . ." and my companion wept again whilst describing this impressive scene. To-day aeroplanes are flying; they drop a few bombs, but the Blessed Virgin is with us.

Assuring you, my Most Honored Mother, of our filial gratitude and our willingness in the performance of our present duty so consoling, yet at times so sad, I have the honor to be, etc.

SISTER DEVILDER

We here insert two other letters describing the most terrible bombardment to which the city of Rheims had until then been subjected, and which lasted from the evening of the 21st to that of the 22d of February.

The official report is thus worded :

“The bombardment lasted the first time six hours, the second, five; one thousand five hundred bombs were thrown on all quarters of the city. The part of the Cathedral still standing, was terribly damaged; the interior vault which had up to that time resisted, caved in. There were also many victims; about twenty houses were set on fire.”

*Letter from SISTER DESGARETS
to the MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE*

Rheims, Roederer Orphanage
February 24, 1915.

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever !

Sister Devilder must have terrified Sister Assistant by her description of the terrible night of the 21st. Everything seemed doomed. A perfect hurricane of bombs from two forts swept over the city at the same time and their course was traced by fiery streaks in the sky, while the city was lighted by eighteen fires. Had all the explosive bombs burst, the whole city would have been in flames. The downpour of bombs lasted five hours without interruption, on an average of fifteen a minute. While passing through the yard, one of our Sisters counted ten of these whizzing projectiles. I may say that “one thousand fell at our right and ten thousand at our left,” yet not one touched us. Some fell about one hundred metres from us and the noise made in falling, mingled with that of the cannon, was deafening. During these fearful hours, we remained with our children in the chapel, and fervently—for terror made us fervent—implored the help of our Immaculate Mother, and we feel confident that she it was

who preserved us. It was reported that there were over a thousand victims.

While we prayed, our sisters of the ambulance received the wounded soldiers. Sister Saint-Péreuse will herself relate to you, my Most Honored Mother, the sad scenes she witnessed during this terrible night which for us was filled with marvels of grace and of protection from our Blessed Mother and Saint Genevieve.

No one seemed to experience any ill effects from this extremely fatiguing night. We retired at half-past two, but were up for the six o'clock Mass. Our sisters' courage continues the same, and I am happy for your sake and for the honor of the Community, to repeat the words of our head major: "Your sisters are above all praise." This was in answer to what I said to him laughingly: "When you are displeased with our sisters, I will give the needed admonitions."

I trust that I may never have but consoling news to impart to you.

Accept, etc.,

SISTER DESGARETS

Letter from SISTER DEVILDER
to the MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE.

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

Sister has written you about the terrible night of February 21. She had told Sister Saint-Péreuse to give you all details about the ambulance, but the latter being too busy this morning in the operating room, asked me to substitute, and I am delighted to comply with her request.

Sister has doubtless mentioned that we were miraculously preserved through the Blessed Virgin's protection during this night of unprecedented horror. The number of

bombs thrown into our poor city is said to have been nearly two thousand; four hundred fell around us. The noise of their shrill whizzing and terrific bursting, as well as the roaring of cannon was terrible, while fires were started at different points. We believed our last hour had come. What a night!

From nine o'clock, a few minutes after the bursting of the first bomb, the bell of the wounded began to ring. A dying policeman was brought in, then lieutenants whose wounds had to be dressed, and a captain, half of whose face was blown away (no eyes, no nose) who claimed immediate care. While this man was being operated on, two soldiers carried in a young lieutenant who was in a dying condition and who incoherently urged us to help his colonel, his captain, and comrades, wounded near him and left in the street. The stretcher-bearers at once started out in search of the wounded, despite the shower of bombs. Several times they were obliged to throw themselves on the ground during the search. Never had we passed through such frightful moments.

The young lieutenant was still in the hands of the surgeons, when his colonel was carried in, but it was too late, he had just expired. A soldier-priest had given him absolution on the way. A few hours later, a new victim arrived—an artillery lieutenant killed on the spot; another captain of the staff was mortally wounded.

But I must stop, my Most Honored Mother, my description of this scene of horror which however is not without some consolation, for all these brave men were Christians, of which we have unmistakable proofs. Among the four victims cut down at one blow, the two lieutenants were the very ones who had brought in the dying policeman, saying as they did so: "Call the priest, quick." They bade us farewell and then started for their division where they again met their colonel and captain.

The telephone at the division rang, but a new bomb cut off connections. The lieutenants then decided to go at once to the central telephone office to secure some information, as a night attack was apprehended. Walking rapidly, they passed the ambulance a second time, and it was then they were struck down by two bombs. Pools of blood mark the spot where these victims of duty fell. We laid them out piously side by side, one flag serving as a shroud for both.

The funeral services solemn yet simple, were held in a small military ambulance outside the city, as more projectiles were expected. The Cardinal spoke in a most touching manner and the general concluded by these words: "These men had faith, hence they are now in possession of what they believed and hoped for, near the God of armies, who will be the God of victory!"

The bombardment still continues and the French cannon is vigorously responding at different points. There are many victims in the city; the Cathedral has again been struck, the vault is injured, etc., etc. This morning another captain was killed in our neighborhood.

We know, Most Honored Mother, that you are with us in spirit, and pray for us. Your daughters in Rheims do the same for you. I act as their interpreter and with them remain

Your humble and obedient daughter,

SISTER DEVILDER

Here ends the sisters' narration. The bombardment of Rheims continues, still the sisters remain bravely and devotedly at their post, confiding implicitly in Divine Providence.

Our most fervent prayers are offered for them, and we unite in the sentiments of His Holiness, Benedict XV, who wrote some time ago to Cardinal Luçon: "With special attention have we followed the reports concerning the sad events of which Rheims, your episcopal city, has lately been the theater. Be assured, my dear Son, of our heartfelt sympathy in the deep grief caused you

by the sight of so many evils and the thought of the disastrous consequences of war from a religious, artistic and material point of view, in your diocese so sorely tried. We pray most earnestly that the faithful may receive an abundance of heavenly favors and consolations so necessary in their present anguish."

Let us now leave Rheims and turn our steps towards the Vosges. Passing near Clermont-en-Argonne mentioned in our last number, we arrive at Nancy, the last station of our painful journey.

Letter from SISTER BEGUERIE to the
VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General.

Nancy, January 3, 1915

MY MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

While assuring you of my filial and respectful devotedness for our dear Community, I beg to offer you the good wishes of your children of Nancy who are just now very much tried. We lately witnessed a most striking proof of the protection of our Immaculate Mother. You must have heard of it. On the morning of the 26th, a zeppelin dropped bombs in our quarter of the city, causing considerable damage. We were not spared; the chapel windows and those of the children's dormitory were shattered, but a fact altogether miraculous is, that despite the fragments which were violently showered in all directions, covering beds and floors with pieces of glass, tile, and wood, not a child received the least injury. Our house was shaken as if by an earthquake. I must also mention, my Most Honored Father, that two bombs fell on a neighboring house only a few metres distant from us. The house collapsed; fortunately it was empty, the former occupants having left the city. At every moment, I offer a prayer of thanksgiving, so deep is my gratitude for our miraculous protection.

We earnestly ask your blessing for our little Community here which also recommends itself to your fervent prayers.

SISTER BEGUERIE

Owing to the war, the government was obliged to suspend the execution of its laws regarding the closing of schools, and classes in our asylums. We trust that these laws may be more than suspended, and never more resumed. The orphanage of Elancourt is one of those which profited by this suspension. Abbé Bon, the director of this asylum, related at the general assembly of its benefactors, held on Friday, Feb. 19, 1915, the various events which so clearly demonstrate the conduct of Divine Providence in its regard. We here cite a few passages :

Thus our unhappy mayor who had labored so zealously to have the orphanage closed, and who had remarked to every one who would listen to him that all the sisters would leave, was obliged himself to inform us of the measures taken by the government to retain the sisters at their post of devotedness.

Still more, from the 15th of August, the prefecture granted us a war allowance, of which I shall speak presently, when treating of finances; and our unfortunate mayor was confronted with the mandate attesting the good will in our regard of the very officers whom he had previously prejudiced against us.

Moreover, after his precipitous flight at the time of the German invasion, and his less honorable return immediately after the danger had been averted, this miserable man was obliged to hand in his resignation; thus by a stroke of divine justice, he was the one to leave, while the sisters were permitted to remain. May they ever remain!

Who could have surmised some months ago when we were making so many vain applications to secure the maintenance of the class sisters, that God would prevent by this terrible war, the projects of the government.

It is needless to describe our anxiety at the approach of the enemy, especially on learning of the order to evacuate which was served to the hospice of Pontchartrain and to the orphanage of the Nobertines, since we are located between these two establishments. We considered

it our duty to be in readiness also to leave; but first of all to reduce as far as possible the number of our children, by obliging their relatives to take them back immediately. Thus nearly one hundred and fifty were disposed of; but we still had two hundred and fifty whom no one could claim. The Sister Superioress was assured of an asylum at Redon, in Brittany, and it was decided that the sisters should take the orphans away at the first notice from the government which had promised to facilitate their departure.

Thanks be to God, the danger was averted. "Truly a miracle," said a wounded officer to the Sister Superioress of Rambouillet. The Germans had really approached so near us, that a patrol one day came to ask me if I had seen any uhlands.

Life has resumed its normal course; our children, one by one, have returned; for their relatives being without resources, and often without work, have hastened to bring them back, and to-day the number exceeds three hundred and fifty. As formerly, they are taught by the sisters who have joyfully resumed their classes, to which they firmly believed they had bidden an eternal farewell. Still more, the prefecture has granted us an allowance for each child.

As though the Holy Virgin wished to give us another manifest and almost miraculous sign of her maternal protection, this allowance was granted on August 15, our patronal feast; and, by a no less marvelous coincidence, we received the first allowance on September 1, the exact date marked for the closing of the orphanage and the departure of the class sisters. O wonderful goodness of Divine Providence!

At Vitry-le-François Divine Providence has equally manifested itself in an extraordinary manner. Several letters from Vitry appeared in our last number, so at present we shall content our-

selves with an account of the works of the Daughters of Charity in this city since the beginning of the war.

Letter from SISTER CLERY, Sister Servant of the Hospital and the House of Charity of Vitry-le-François, to the MOST HONORED MOTHER MAURICE.

MY MOST HONORED MOTHER,

The grace of our Lord be with us forever!

We are again at the hospital. We shall begin our account with the Master's return after an exile of eight years. The chapel had likewise passed through the disasters of invasion, but not that of the Germans.

This last time, the poor chapel despoiled and dishonored, was used as a storeroom for flour and provisions. Little by little, we restored the original neatness. The ruins of the altar we covered with hangings and flags, replaced the statues of the Saints, dragged benches out of the attic or from the court-yard, and now while assisting at the services rendered more beautiful by the faith and piety of the soldiers, we seem to forget the past and await the future with peaceful confidence.

I must interrupt this letter in order to assist at the Mass in honor of Saint Barbara, patroness of the establishment from its foundation.

Tradition has always kept up the good dinner on this feast, but to-day we renewed the golden chain which binds heaven and earth by having the Holy Sacrifice offered for the founders. The hospital was established about the year 1660 by the same family who at this epoch founded the House of Charity.

We have to borrow everything for the chapel, as we no longer have linen, ornaments or sacred vessels. Every Saturday, we bring from the House of Charity or from the parish church, all that is needed for Sunday. If you

know any sister having 2 000 francs that she wishes to dispose of in favor of some good work, recommend us to her charity, but from you, Most Honored Mother, I beg the chalice which will each day be used at the Holy Sacrifice. I shall give the ciborium, and thus Jesus will have mother and daughter as His first benefactresses. Are you willing?

Our good soldiers celebrate the feasts in a most edifying manner. Every day we witness the acts of faith and piety that others read of in the papers; Communions are frequent and morning and night prayers said in the wards, although we have not made the latter obligatory, and if sister is not present one of the sick says them aloud. Before meals, they ask: "May we not say a prayer, we are not animals."

We are moved even to tears at these daily incidents; they reveal in true light the French nature with all its noble qualities brought out in the austere school of war. This evening, Benediction in honor of Saint Barbara, then a little entertainment by our convalescent performers. If my letter has not gone, I shall inclose a program.

But we must not delay, we have not yet begun to go through the house, and we have to visit eighteen halls, without counting the rooms, corners and nooks wherein the chief doctor daily crowds in beds, or whatever may serve as such. Five sisters from Paris, two from Vitry, besides your little servant and the sister housekeeper, give their services to the numerous sick and wounded who occupy these wards; two Franciscan Sisters, two Sisters of Bon-Secours, one Dominican Sister and several ladies of the Red Cross assist in the service. It is a mixed personnel, transient, very devoted, admirable in their union, but temporary, and one that will soon be scattered.

Leaving this house, let us visit our house of many

works called the parish house. The dispensary daily receives thirty or forty sick. The kitchen has become a real boiler room where are two immense boilers. Here Sister Martha daily cooks two or three hundred portions which she distributes to the poor and the refugees. We do the same at our own house where a similar boiler is installed in the laundry. In this house we every Thursday, receive the children of the patronage; here too, are held the reunions of working women and young girls.

We leave Sister Martha at her cooking or with her Catechism class, Sister Léonide in the dispensary, and we pass on to Sainte-Croix Street.

In the former presbytery, which had been transformed into a municipal infant asylum, we have temporarily placed our old people who, on their return from their sad exile, found their places occupied by soldiers. There Sister Vincent exerts all her ingenuity to interest her old men and women; she cares for them all admirably, and so divides her time as not to permit our little orphan girls to suffer thereby.

We now come to the house of charity. This house though very dilapidated is none the less a centre and a home. Here we piously celebrated the Feast of the 27th, and the little chapel was not once during the day without worshippers; the Blessed Sacrament remained exposed until after Benediction, which terminated the day during which prayer for France was continuous. Sister Marie keeps house, takes care of the children and attends to the numerous requests which are made each day.

We next visit the patronage for boys, which is at present an asylum for those expelled from the Argonne. These refugees are not the most edifying, and in some manner belong to the category of those wretched beings to whom Saint Vincent caused two cents to be given when dismissing them from the town. But we must keep them,

since the misfortune of war has brought them to us. Every morning, Sister Margaret counts her bed coverings, for the idea of mine and thine seems not very clear in the minds of these poor creatures,—then she returns to serve them at mealtime to prevent “the peasant” from quarrelling with “the prince,” and to safeguard the interests of all.

A workroom has been organized for those women who are willing and anxious to work. On our way we must say “good morning” to our patronage for young girls, where, under the direction of a devoted lady of charity, twenty-three are employed making clothing which is divided among them in proportion to their necessities.

Let us now visit the free school for boys. This place is at present a civil hospital, for we had to provide for the sick of Vitry. We can here afford a ward for women, one for men, one for children, and a small maternity. The house was filled before it was fully prepared. Sister Barbet from Paris is in charge.

There is, Most Honored Mother, another station, and this will be the last... the entertainment hall which, originally intended for pleasure, has been first used for charity. The Red Cross here accommodates the convalescent who have left the hospital. The place is large and beautiful, but they are growing tired of it. . . . Sister Leonide is the only sister to aid the ladies of the Red Cross. Every Sunday we decorate a little altar whereon the Holy Sacrifice is celebrated, and here, where the devil thought to lead the orchestra, we now listen to the French soldiers singing in full chorus: “We need God,” and “I am a Christian.”

Our walk is over, Most Honored Mother, does it not suggest the need of laborers to aid us in the superhuman task?

We recommend ourselves to your prayers during these days of benediction, and beg you to offer to our worthy

Sister Assistant our best regards. Accept the sentiments of filial respect and obedience with which, etc.

SISTER CLERY.

As all the accounts are similar to those which we have just reported, we shall not cite them, but shall only mention the following.

At Souppes, Seine-et-Marne, the pastor has been drafted; the priests of the neighboring parishes replace him when they are able. We are obliged, writes Sister Berche, to fill the office of curate for the time being, by holding the catechism classes, singing the Vespers on Sunday, reciting the chaplet every day in common, and by baptizing children in danger of death.

In the ambulances, the sisters are always satisfied with the soldiers.

It is curious, said one, to see the old adjutants, as docile and submissive as children, however their rank calls for this.

From Villers-Cotterets, a sister writes :

We are happy, in the midst of our noble soldiers: they are courageous, resigned to the will of God, especially at the moment of death. Every evening, there is Benediction in the church to which officers and simple privates come in crowds, and it is touching to hear these men singing with heart and voice, the hymns of the Church. For Christmas, we had one hundred eleven Communions, and not many weeks pass without some Communions.. All, majors and soldiers alike, love the cornette. May we ever prove ourselves true daughters of Saint Vincent!

One of the reasons for this esteem is that the sisters' zeal is prudent, as recommended by their founder Saint Vincent. This far from impeding, seems to render more efficacious, the assistance God grants them in their work for souls.

At Courance, Seine-et-Oise, the soldiers themselves asked for midnight Mass. A young lieutenant, a college professor, seeing a sister reciting her chaplet, asked for one, and begged her to explain to him the manner of saying it; he also asked for a life of our Lord:

Sister, said he, before the war I knew little of the Sisters of Charity, but I respected them; now that I have seen them at work, I cannot find words to express my sentiments in their regard.

The father of another officer, said to the sisters, on the day of his son's departure:

Sister, I cannot here express my gratitude to you; but I have some influence in my department, and therefore, hereafter all that I can possibly do for religious, shall be done.

From Vichy we hear the same consoling news. A poor man who came into the hospital blaspheming and saying: "God thinks of those only who do not need Him," was soon overcome by the kindness shown him, put himself under instruction, was baptized by his nurse, a priest of the neighborhood; had his marriage blessed and is now preparing to make his First Communion.

It will be remarked that in these accounts the sisters are far from deserving the reproaches of a certain paper which accuses them of profiting by the weakness of the sick, in order to effect their conversion. What is it that has brought about the conversions we speak of as well as so many others. It is the devotedness of the sisters. They care for the body, speak some kind consoling words, and prejudices are overthrown, and the sick themselves solicit the succors of religion.

We reproduce the following protestation confirming what we say. It is quoted from *La Croix* of Thursday, April 8, 1915.

A JUST RETORT

The *Réveil socialiste* of Dijon having published under the heading "Liberty of Conscience" a defamatory article against St. Joseph's Hospital of Lyons, received the following letter, from the administration's counsel.

Sir:

The issue of the *Réveil socialiste* of March 6, contains an article denouncing St. Joseph's Hospital, Lyons.

You pretend that in consequence of pressure brought to bear by the sisters on a wounded man, as yet unbaptized, he would have been compelled to make his First Communion. You demand a rigid investigation and, the case occurring, exemplary proceedings.

You were obeyed.

An investigation was ordered. It proved that there was not a word of truth in your allegations.

There had been from the beginning of hostilities, but one First Communion in the hospital. It took place at the formal request of the patient who had been baptized the day after his birth, and who, at the time of his request, was not sufficiently ill to be confined to bed, and received Communion in the chapel.

St. Joseph's Hospital is a Catholic hospital.

The administrators and the admirable Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul who consecrate their lives to the care of the sick are firmly convinced that religious belief after bringing forth so many acts of heroism on the field of battle among our priests and soldiers, is again for those on their beds of pain, the most powerful comforter. They think that many times when all human hope has disappeared the hope of the hereafter is the best and sweetest of consolations. Consequently they place the succors of religion within the reach of our sick. But never has any influence whatever been used. Each one is at liberty to preserve his own convictions. I defy you to cite the name of a single sick or wounded man who by reason of his opinions, has received less care or devoted attention. There is no looking for evasion. We await the statement.

You will please, Sir, conformable to our right to a reply, insert this letter in your next number.

*President of the Administrative Board of
St. Joseph's Hospital*

A. PUVIS DE CHAVANNES

In fine, to complete our little sketch, let us say that many of our sisters have been cited in the order of the day or proposed for gold medals. We shall not name them for fear of wounding their modesty; but we shall say that for many of our sisters, there is prepared in heaven, numberless citations in the order of the great day of eternity, and many medals for the acceptance of which, the permission of Superiors will not be necessary.

AUSTRIA

*Letter of SISTER SEBOK, Daughter of Charity, to
VERY REV. E. VILLETTE, Superior General.*

Budapest, January 4, 1915.

MOST HONORED FATHER,

Your blessing, if you please!

It is with great pleasure that I hasten to send you the reply requested by our Most Honored Mother.

Until now we had not thought of counting the sisters who are devoting themselves to the service of the poor wounded. But at your request I have counted the houses and the sisters employed in this duty, and I find a total of forty permanent hospitals, with seven hundred and thirty of our sisters doing service either for the wounded or the sick.

In thirty-one field-hospitals erected in our schools, one

hundred and eighty-eight care for the wounded, and besides there are in twenty-three other field-hospitals, one hundred and six sisters employed.

Finally, at one station, through which the health-trains pass bringing the wounded from the battlefield, from twenty to twenty-five sisters from one house help the doctors and the nurses during the day and also during the night, to change the dressings of the wounded.

With us, there is but one health-train to which two of our sisters are attached; they are there almost constantly occupied. This is why we change them frequently, and thus six of our sisters are employed at this work.

Thanks be to God, I am able to tell you, Most Honored Father, that neither labor nor weariness lessens the great devotion of our sisters in the service of the poor soldiers. In the meantime, one of them being taken sick, fell a victim of her devotedness. After an illness of eight days, she died on the 13th of December. We hope that she prays that the whole world may soon have peace.

Be pleased, Most Honored Father, to give us your blessing, and accept the expression of most respectful regard from your daughter who wishes to remain in the love of our Lord,

Your most humble and obedient child,

SISTER VILMA SEBOK.